NIRALA SERIES

MAOISTS IN THE LAND OF BUDDHA

An Analytical Study of the Maoist Insurgency in Nepal

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PRAKASH A. RAJ

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Prakash A. Raj was born in Kathmandu in 1943 and was educated in India, the United States and the Netherlands. He worked for the Nepalese Government and the United Nations as staff member. He has also worked as consultant for such agencies as the World Bank, UNDP, ILO, GTZ and IUCN. He has written several books in English and Nepali. These include travel guidebooks, account of the Royal Massacre in Nepal and biographies. He has also given talks at several American colleges and universities on the Maoist Insurgency in Nepal.

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Foreword

Nepal has been known as a peaceful nation where Buddha was born two thousand five hundred years earlier. It has also been known as a country of breathtaking views of the Himalayas containing eight out of ten highest peaks of the world including Mount Everest. Nepal has stood out as a special nation popular with tourists from Europe, North America and Japan.

A bloody massacre of the royal family including King Birendra in June 1, 2001 allegedly by the Crown Prince Dipendra who also killed his mother the queen, brother, sister, uncle and aunt before committing suicide turned out to be an event without precedent in the history of the world. Prince Gyanendra who had once been crowned in 1950 was crowned again after fifty years. Today Nepal has got another name as a scene of a Maoist insurgency that wants to abolish monarchy and make it a "People's Republic". The insurgents controlled a large part of the country, especially in the western hills and more than 7,000 people were killed by the end of 2002. This insurgency caused a setback to democracy in Nepal that had flourished since a "Popular Movement" in 1990 that resulted in people of Nepal being sovereign. The monarch dismissed an elected Prime Minister in October 2002. He was called "incompetent" for being unable to hold elections within six months of dissolution of Parliament as required under the Constitution promulgated in 1990. However, a cease-fire was agreed between the Government and the insurgents in January 2003 and dialogue between the two parties started in early 2003. Will the Maoists give up their arms and join the political process after renouncing violence and run for elections? However, there are still questions whether the talks will succeed. Will Nepal turn into another Cambodia, Peru or Afghanistan as the carnage by the Maoists in the remote Western district of Achham in February 2002 had led the American Ambassador to compare the Maoists with Khmer Rouge, Shining Path and Al Quaida?

The author in India, the Netherlands and the United States gave a series of lectures in 2002 and 2003 that were helpful in writing this book. These included United Services Institute, New Delhi, India, the Netherlands and four colleges and Universities in the United States: Asian Studies Center, Michigan State University, Center of South Asian Studies, University of Michigan, Albright College, Reading, Pennsylvania and Benedict College in South Carolina. . I'm especially thankful to Norma Jackson and Syed I. Mahdi from South Carolina, Roxanne Gupta from Pennsylvania, Tom Wagner and Michael Lewis from Michigan, Roger Tangri and J.W. Bjorkman from the Netherlands, Lt.

General Satish Nambiar and Major General Y.K.Gera from India for inviting me to deliver talks that made the writing of this book possible. I'm also grateful to Professor Scott Palmer of Boston University who has written books on the *Shining Path* of Peru for going through the manuscript and giving useful advice on comparative aspects of insurgency in Nepal and Peru. I have published extensively on the insurgency in such Nepalese dailies such as The *Kathmandu Post, The Himalayan Times, People's Review* and *Nepal Samacharpatra* in 2002-2003.

I'd like to thank Nirala Publications for bringing the book in time.

August 2003
Prakash A.Raj

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Prologue

The year was 1950 and the first half of the twentieth century was about to come to an end. A series of far reaching changes were about to start in the forbidden kingdom of Nepal. The king was leading a revolution against a century old oligarchy known as the Ranas and had fled the country to neighbouring India. He had taken the Crown Prince and his eldest son along with his two queens with him. The Ranas had crowned his second grandson Gyanendra as the monarch. The King was to return triumphantly in February 1951 as the Ranas were overthrown.

Around this time, in far away hills of western Nepal two sons were born in the early 1950's to Brahmin families in the hills in western Nepal. The village of Naudanda is situated in the western fringe of Pokhara valley that had yet to become an important tourist center. There were no roads linking it either with Kathmandu or the Indian border. The valley would attract thousands of tourists few decades later. The village itself would attract thousands of trekkers on their way to Jomosom and Muktinath that was to become the Annapurna trekking area famous not only in Nepal but the world over.

The first child was born in this village. He was the eldest of eight children in a peasant family. By the 1960's malaria had been eradicated in the southern lowlands of Nepal near the Indian border. There was a migration from the overpopulated hills to the Terai, especially the fertile valley of Chitwan. The Dahal family, the first boy's family also migrated from the village on the Western fringe of Pokhara valley to Chitwan on foot in 1963. There were no tourists in Pokhara at that time. They migrated to the village of Sivanagar in Western Chitwan close to Royal Chitwan National Park that would later be included in Unesco's *Natural Heritage of Mankind list.* The new village was more fertile than the village in the hills that they had left behind. The boy went to school there and studied agriculture in a college at Rampur that had been set up under the assistance of USAID. The boy was named Pushpa Kamal Dahal who would later be named *Prachanda* meaning " the terrible" in Nepali He would later be called "one of the most secretive mass leaders in the world" according to an article published in an Indian newspaper[1].

The second Brahmin boy was born in 1953 in the village of Khoplang in the district of Gorkha situated halfway between Kathmandu and Pokhara. It was in Gorkha that King Prithvi Narayan Shah first initiated the process of unification of Nepal in 1768. There were at that time more than fifty small principalities and kingdoms of what now is Nepal including the rich and prosperous kingdoms situated in Kathmandu valley. The King from Gorkha conquered the city state of Kathmandu that was to be the first major conquest in the process of unification. The second boy was sent to study in the school started by Western missionaries in a village called Aap Pipal in Gorkha District that was situated near the small airport that had been constructed in early 1960's, the first such airport in the district. It was only in the early 1950's that Western missionaries were allowed to open schools in the Hindu kingdom of Nepal. He had a brilliant academic career and always stood first in his class. The second Brahmin boy was Baburam Bhattarai, one of the two most important Maoist leaders in Nepal (the other being Pushpa Kamal Dahal, a.k.a Prachanda). He was to receive his Doctorate degree in architecture and planning from Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in 1987 situated in New Delhi, India under Colombo Plan fellowship. His PhD thesis was on "*The nature of underdevelopment and regional structure of Nepal" that was recently published by an Indian publisher* [2].

At JNU he was considered to be a silent worker with organizational skills, a short, thin and docile person who was not involved in revolutionary student politics of the University at that time. He is reported to have spent most of his time among Nepalese working in Delhi as reported in *The Hindu*. He got married to Hisila Yemi, daughter of Dharma Ratna Yemi, a Newar Buddhist girl who chose not to use her husband's name as her last name after marriage. Her father had been a minister appointed by King Tribhuwan in the early 1950's after advent of democracy in Nepal and chose to replace his family name Tuladhar with *Yemi,* meaning inhabitant of the city of Kathmandu. The word for Kathmandu in Newari, the language spoken in Kathmandu valley is *Yen.* Her *nom de guerre* is Comrade Parvati, also name of Lord

Siva's consort.

When Baburam was asked later to explain briefly about himself and what made him start an Armed Uprising in Nèpal, he replied that he could be considered as a representative of an educated youth of peasant background who found exploitation and underdevelopment of majority of population intolerable and thought Marxism Leninism-Maoism as saviour[3]. Prachanda and Baburam Bhattarai were to lead the Maoist Movement in Nepal that brought far-reaching changes in Nepal that will be described in detail in this book.

The two Brahmin boys leading the revolution came from peasant families and had no background or training in arms. Another boy was born in the early fifties in a village in the District of Gulmi in western Nepal in the family of *Magars*, a tribal people who supplied a large number of Gurkha soldiers. It was a custom in his village for almost all the households to supply soldiers to the British and the Indian armies. The boy's family was also no exception. His father had served for thirty- two years in the Indian army and had fought in the Second World War[4]. His family had also migrated to the fertile plains of Chitwan and settled near the major town there called Bharatpur. He also studied in Agricultural College in Rampur in Chitwan. He was sent to study in the former Soviet Union on a scholarship. Some unconfirmed reports say he received military training in Chechnya or Libya[5]. The Russian Ambassador to Nepal said recently that Badal did not put to good use the training that he received in Russia. (*Rajdhani*, 30/4/02). His *nom de* *guerre* is "Badal" which in Nepali means cloud. He has admitted that his marriage was also "political" and his wife Nayankala is also with the party[6]. He was the military commander of the Maoists and the main strategist that would make them an important player in the political scene in Nepal.

If the two Brahmins: Prachanda and Baburam had excelled in organization and in intellectual writing, the *Janjati* Magar whose family background was in serving in the army was to receive credit as a master military strategist. The paradox of the whole exercise was the fact the two Brahmins Maoist leaders were leading a movement demanding that Nepal be declared a secular state. On the other hand, the movement whose leading military strategist was a Magar, an ethnic group that supplied the largest number of Gurkha soldiers to both British and the Indian armies was also demanding that Gurkha recruiting centers in Nepal be closed.

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CHAPTER ONE

Roots

Unrest in the Himalayas

> "While the conflict in Nepal has no doubt a political, ideological and even geo-political dimension its main root causes are social and economic, related to frustrated expectation that came with the advent of democracy, related to abject poverty that persists for a large percentage of the population related to poor and inefficient delivery of social services in areas such as education and health and related to inequality, exclusion and discrimination. A large percentage of the population of Nepal, in particular Dalits and members of ethnic groups feel that they are politically and economically excluded, unable to contribute to decisions that affect their lives and unable to benefit from the economic advancement of the nation."
>
> —**Henning Karcher, UNDP Resident**
> Representative in Nepal
> (19 May 2003)

Nepal is a small country situated between two of the biggest countries of the world in terms of population, India and China. Both of its neighbours have populations over a billion but tiny Nepal with an area of 141,000 sq.km only has 25 million people. It borders the densely populated Gangetic Plains in the south consisting of Indian states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar having a population of more than 250 million. Its northern borders are with Tibet region of China has a population of only 6 million. Nepal's northern border with sparsely populated Tibet is regulated and a passport and visa needed to cross it. On the other hand, its border with its southern neighbour is an open one and no passport or visa is needed to cross it for residents of Nepal or India. This is one of the paradoxes that has created many problems and has also been a contributing factor to the Maoist insurgency. Many of the leaders of the Maoist insurgency were taking sanctuary in India, perhaps without the knowledge of the Indian Government. There are many insurgent groups similar to the Maoists fighting in different states of India. It is also a developing country having a per capita income of only US$250 in 2001 which was also categorized by the United Nations as one of the least developed, a list which includes over forty-nine countries, situated mainly in South Asia or sub-Saharan Africa.

The Human Development Report of the year 2003 listed that 42% of the people were living below poverty line and literacy among females was only 28 percent. There was one doctor per 20,000 persons. While 80% of the people are dependent upon agriculture, per capita land availability has decreased from 0.54 hectares in 1954 to 0.15 hectares in 1998.

Nepal also contains many distinctive features. It is the only country in the world having eight out of ten highest peaks in the world including Mount Everest, the highest one. It's the only Hindu kingdom in the world and the only one where a *Living Goddess* is taken on a procession in the city of Kathmandu. It also contains two natural and two cultural sites to be included in UNESCO's *Heritage of Mankind* list. It also contains one of the most popular trekking routes in the Himalayas. These are some of the attractions that made Nepal a popular country for the tourists in Asia. The number of tourists visiting Nepal was close to half million in the beginning of the new millennium. It was a spectacular success for a country that was closed to the tourists till 1950. The rising momentum of insurgency was one of the major factors in causing its decrease.

Nepal is divided into four distinct geographical areas. The main Himalayan ranges containing the highest peaks in the world including Mount Everest forms the Nepal-Tibetan region of China boundary along the eastern border of Nepal. The Himalayan range in the western part of the country lies entirely within Nepalese territory and Nepal also contains a trans-Himalayan area in Mustang, Manang, Dolpo and Humla. The middle hills running across the length of Nepal ranging in altitude from 1,000 to 3,000 meters includes Pokhara and Kathmandu valley. It's densely populated and a large number of people from this region are dependent upon employment outside the country, mainly in India. It was actually in the central part of the middle hills that this insurgency had its beginnings. There is a stretch of flat land on the foothills of the middle hills forming a part of the Gangetic Plains that's called the Terai. There are also two intermontane valleys named Chitwan and Dang. As the insurgency started in the hills just north of Dang valley, it is also one of the most affected regions of the insurgency. The demography of many districts of the Terai changed in 1960s and 1970s, as there was large-scale migration from the hills.

(i) Breeding Ground of Insurgency

The insurgency started in February 1996 in the hilly areas of mid western part of Nepal where few roads had been constructed in the past five decades when planned development started in the country. Nepal is divided into seventy five districts and two organizations, SNV (the Dutch aid agency) and an international NGO named ICIMOD made a study of all the districts of the country taking into account such factors as per capita income, life expectancy, women's empowerment and access to roads. It was found that eighteen districts in the mid western and far western parts of the country were at the bottom of the seventy-five districts of the country. It is interesting to note that two integrated rural development projects were started in the area in 1980's under the American and the Canadian assistance. Although half million tourists visited Nepal in 1998, less than one percent visited this area. There are also some experts who argue that the roots of insurgency in the mid western and far western hills of Nepal are environmental in nature. While Nepal as a whole has lost 24 percent of its forest cover from the 1985 to 2000, the mid western and far western hills have lost 31 percent and 28 percent respectively[1]

This was where the insurgency had its beginnings. The insurgents had a list of demands, many of which seemed reasonable. Many people supported them in the earlier stages of the insurgency. The insurgents attacked the police posts at first and easily defeated them in most places. The first such attack took place at Halleri in Rolpa District in February 1996 where a temple was also set on fire. One French anthropologist[2] who did field work in the area called the district as a "natural site for guerilla warfare" as it was situated at an altitude 1,500 to 2,000 meters and was surrounded by dense forests in the north. There were no hospitals or industry in the area. The area was also isolated due to lack of communication.

Most of the inhabitants in the area were a tribal group known as *kham Magar*. There is a saying in Nepal that Magars are supposed to follow their leaders loyally. Although Magars are the largest tribal groups in Nepal and one of the main constituents of Gurkha soldiers in the British and the Indian armies, most of these were from the hilly area further to the east and there were few recruits from Rolpa itself. Actually, the remuneration and pensions that soldiers and ex-soldiers of the British and the Indian armies play an important role in the economy of areas east of this region such as Gulmi, the home of one of three main Maoist leaders, Ram

Bahadur Thapa, Badal. The Kham Magars live in thirty compact villages in Rolpa and Rukum districts. They are endogamous. One ethnic Magar leader who later became a Minister has said that Magars were being "used" by both the Army and the Maoists whose leaders were high caste Brahmins. The area where the unification of Nepal started in late half of eighteenth century also contains a large number of Magars. Many Magars were recruited in the army of King Prithvi Narayan Shah who conquered Kathmandu valley in 1768. He belonged to Thakuri caste, a Kshetriaya although he was called "King of Magarat", a word meaning the land of Magars.[3]

It is interesting to note that an Integrated Rural Development assisted by USAID was started in Rapti Zone consisting of Rolpa and Rukum. The American assistance started in 1980 and continued for fifteen years till 1995 and $50 million was spent for the project. The Maoist insurgency was to start few months after the termination of assistance project. These districts where the insurgency started still remain one of the most affected districts. The objective of the project was that farmers would get rich after following their model of commercial farming and selling produce. However, only few people became affluent[4] .On the other hand, a study in Dhorpatan area just north of the Rolpa district[5] did not find conflict along caste or ethnic lines. Whenever conflict existed it was between militant political groups and the state on one hand, and between political parties on the other. Another Integrated Rural Development Project under Canadian assistance, called K-BIRD (Karnali Bheri Integrated Rural

Development Project) was started in Bheri and Karnali Zones situated west of Rolpa.

(ii) Legacy of Backwardness and Neglect

Nepal was divided into more than fifty small kingdoms and principalities in 1768 when King Prithvi Narayan Shah of Gorkha who conquered the powerful kings of the Kathmandu valley started the process of unification. Nepal was ruled by an oligarchy for more than a century since 1846 when democracy made its first advent in 1951. It has been a constitutional monarchy since 1990. The country was ruled by a partyless system of government called "Panchayat System" in which the monarch was all-powerful. There was a popular movement called *Jana Andolan* that transferred sovereign powers from the monarch to the people and political parties were allowed to operate. A constitution was promulgated in 1990, which started a parliamentary system of government in which the leader of the largest party or a coalition also headed the government and became Prime Minister. There were great expectations when a new era was started in 1990. Elections were held three times in twelve years and Prime Minister was chosen from among the members of majority party in Parliament. However, the elected government "failed to deliver" and there was widespread corruption. Areas and ethnic groups that had remained backward could not make much progress. This was especially applicable in the case of the hilly region of mid-western and far-western part of the country that remained backward and received little attention ever since it was incorporated in Nepal during the course of unification towards end of eighteenth century. On the other hand, the Terai region consisting of "Naya Muluk" or new country was restored to Nepal in 1856 after being taken away during Sugauli Treaty with the British in 1816. This area remained backward and was inhabited mainly by the Tharus before a large number of settlers from the hills moved here in the later third of the twentieth century. The Maoists were especially successful in controlling Rajapur area of western Bardia district as it was situated between two effluents of Karnali river as it descended from the hills to the Terai and was isolated from the rest of the country as there was no bridge linking the area. Many of the absentee landlords in this region were dependent upon a group of bonded labour in their land known as *Kamaiya*. Government freed them from bonded labour in the year 2000 without making adequate preparations about their settlement. Maoists succeeded in recruiting many of them in their movement. Most of the absentee landlords had left the district and the Maoists were cultivating the fields.[6] There was also a charismatic communist leader named Mohan Bikram Singh from Piuthan district situated next to Rolpa who had started communist movement there as early as 1954 that included punishing moneylenders and organizing peasants to get tenancy rights in the land of others that they were tilling. Some consider Singh to be a mentor of such later Maoist leaders as Prachanda and Baburam Bhattarai although he is a member of another Marxist party.

This was the "raison d'etre" why the epicenter of the Maoist movement in Nepal was situated along the most backward areas and received support from certain ethnic groups that had remained backward. Some writers have claimed that Nepal was being ruled by a family and "caste aristocratic group for all parts of its history" and representation of vast majority of population in political and civic affairs was ignored. According to one such writer,[7] a monolithic and systematically structured societal hierarchy of certain class or caste such as Brahmins and Chhetris was created in Nepal. In the opinion of this author, "The economic and social, cultural and linguistic domination by this caste or class and social isolation of a majority population is the rich foundation for acceleration of the Maoist insurgency in Nepal". The Maoist leader Baburam Bhattarai has blamed the ruling class in Nepal having control over and exploited the people. He thought the masses tolerated such brutality of Kings and priests for a long time[8]. He has blamed the system existing in Nepal since the Shah kings initiated its unification in 1768[9].

Another writer asserts that the Maoists have a vested interest in wooing the *Janajatis* and *Dalits* as the oppressed class. According to him, ethnic and regional liberation fronts were mobilized by them and concluded "The Maoist movement has provided scope for significant participation of the *Janjati* and *Dalit* in the political process."[10]

The irony of the whole exercise is that the majority of inhabitants in the most backward area, i.e. mid western and far western hills are made up of high caste Hindus who have been ruling Nepal for more than two centuries. Many high caste people in Nepal are poor. Toni Hagen, the Swiss geologist who was perhaps the first person to travel extensively in Nepal in late 1940's before Nepal left its doors open to the outside world found that the poorest villages that he found were those inhabited by Brahmins or Bahuns. The percentage of literates among Chhetris is lower than some of tribal groups living in the eastern part such as Limbus. Although Bahuns and Chhetris occupy a large percentage of jobs in civil service and army, they also make an overwhelming majority of population in the most backward part of the country.

The following tables shows the list prepared by SNV and published by an international NGO called ICOMOD (*International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development*) categorizing sixteen of all seventy-five districts of Nepal on the basis of such indicators as per capita income, access to road, literacy, women's empowerment in the hilly region in mid-western and far-western Nepal that were at the bottom of the list[11] and the ethnicity of majority of inhabitants. It may be remembered that these hilly districts remain the "heartland" of the insurgency where the control of the government is limited to the district headquarter and Maoists control most of the rural areas.

Table 1

Ethnic Composition of Nepal (Based on 2001 census)	
	Percentage
Chhetri	15.8
Brahmins (hill)-	12.7
Thakuri	1.4
Magar	7.1
Tharu	6.7
Tamang	5.6
Rai	2.8
Gurung	2.4
Limbu	1.6
Sherpa	0.7
Newar	5.5
Kami	3.9
Damai	1.7
Sarki	1.4

Table 2

Religious Composition of Population (2001 Census)	
Hindu	80.6
Buddhist	10.7
Muslim	4.2
Kirat	3.6
Christian	0.5

Table 3

Ranking of 75 Districts of Nepal		
District	Poverty and Deprivation Index	Composite Index of Development
Achham	1	1
Bajhang	6	2
Kalikot	2	3
Humla	7	4
Mugu	5	5
Doti	9	6
Jumla	14	7
Bajura	12	8
Rukum	19	9
Dailekh	3	10
Jajarkot	17	11
Baitadi	18	13
Dadelhura	27	15
Salyan	44	16
Dolpa	40	20
Darchula	25	26

(Source: ICIMOD, Districts of Nepal, Indicators of Development)

Table 4

Districts of Nepal — Percentage of High Castes (Based on 1991 Census)	
District	Percentage of Brahmins, Chhetris and Thakuris
Darchula	86
Bajhang	80
Bajura	70
Humla	67
Mugu	69
Kalikot	73
Jumla	79
Dolpo	53
Baitadi	79
Dadeldhura	79
Doti	67
Achham	67
Dailekh	60
Jajarkot	50
Salyan	60
Rukum	50

(Source: Central Bureau of Statistics)

Another irony may as stated by Anup Pahari, a social scientist[12] in a Paper presented at "The Agenda of Transformation: Inclusion in Nepali Democracy" "it is a fact that in post-1990 Nepal the greatest amount of thought and action regarding the transformation of state, society, and economy has not been undertaken not by those in official power (i.e. state/government) but by the members and leadership of the Maoist movement". However, he questions if the Maoists are advocating wrong vehicle to carry forward that agenda based on "doctrinaire, one size fits all, economistic view of history and society based on the discredited ideas of discredited Europeans". Another article by a columnist accuses political parties of having failed to address a major cause of dissatisfaction of a large section of Nepalese society and have not understood why the support base of the Maoists consists of ethnic communities and Dalits.[13].

However, some of the thoughts of Maoist ideologues are based on wrong interpretation of history. Baburam Bhattarai has written that rulers in Nepal have imposed Hindu religion on the Newar community living in Kathmandu valley[14]. Hinduism and Buddhism have co-existed in Nepal and specifically, Kathmandu valley for hundreds of years. While living goddess, Kumari is chosen from the Shakya clan, which is Buddhist; the Hindu king of Nepal receives her blessings during the festival of Indrajatra, marking the end of the Monsoon. He followed the tradition of the Malla Kings after conquering the city of Kathmandu from Jayaprakash, the last king of Malla dynasty. The Newar Malla kings ruling Kathmandu valley before the Gurkha conquest in 1768 were following Hinduism and constructed many Hindu temples as that of Krishna Temple at Patan Durbar Square. One British scholar has stated that Buddhists in Nepal could worship Hindu Gods in Nepal saying that they are actually worshipping *Avalokiteshwara* while Hindus could worship Buddhist divinities as Hindu divinities[15]. Statements by two leading Buddhist leaders, from Tibet and Bhutan could illustrate this point very well.

The Dalai Lama while interviewed by a Hindi weekly published in New Delhi said the following about Hinduism and Buddhism:

> *I consider Hindus and Buddhists to be twin brothers. There are similarities in both religions in such fields as Samadhi, Yoga and Tantra which the Buddhists hae taken from the Hindus. On the other hand, there are differences between the two religions regarding Atma (soul), Paramatma (God) and Karma. If I say that Hindus and Buddhists are the same, some Buddhists will be critical of me. It would be wrong to say that they are entirely different*[16].

The King of Bhutan while being interviewed by *The Times of India*[17] said:

> *I actively participate in Dussera celebrations. Besides, how can they complain of discrimination when there are so many cultural and religious commonalities between the two groups? Our governing deity is Mahakali and we also worship Shiva and Vishnu.*

A religious book called *Nepal Mahatmya,* a part of the Puranas, written in mid-Ninth century describes the origin of sacred places in the Kathmandu valley. It puts Vishnu, Shiva and Buddha on the same level. It considers the ritual of worshipping Buddha as part of worshipping Shiva or Vishnu. It describes how Parvati, the consort of Siva appeared as Bajrajogini, one of the famous Tantric shrines in Kathmandu valley whose Pujari is a Newar Buddhist Bajracharya but is worshipped by both the Hindus and the Buddhists. It describes how Buddha himself installed a Sivalinga in the valley. Besides, the most famous Buddhist shrine in the valley, Swayambhunath is visited during Shaiva ritual indicative of religious harmony and tolerance existing for more than a thousand years.

Matrika Yadav, leader from the Terai included in Maoist team for dialogue with the Government in April 2003 has stated: "When Prithvi Narayan Shah conquered Nepal cruelly, it was by murder, oppression and fraud.... The land of Madhesh made fertile by blood and sweat of Madhises was captured by him. The owner Madhises became all slaves. One language, one religion and one culture were imposed on all including the Madhises. An overwhelming majority of Madhises (inhabitants of the Terai) follows Hinduism although there are few Muslims among them. When King Prithvi Narayan Shah unified Nepal, one of his objectives was to make a land of Hindus *asli Hindustan*. Most Madhises speak such dialects as Maithili, Bhojpuri and Awadhi recognized in the states of UP and Bihar in India as dialects of Hindi. Actually, Hindi was medium of instruction in schools of the Terai till the 1950's. Although Nepali is the national language of Nepal, it is written in Devanagari script and is also an Indo-European language very closely related to almost all the languages based in Sanskrit[18] spoken in the Terai Madhises. It is true that no language in Nepal other than Nepali was given the designation of official language. However, Nepali is the only language spoken and understood by ninety percent of the population on the country. Don't such sweeping statements by the Maoist leaders indicate their ignorance of the legacy of harmony existing in Nepal and an attempt to use religion for divisive purposes?

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CHAPTER TWO

Terrible Targets

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(I) TARGETING THE SECURITY FORCES

There were eight major attacks by the Maoists in army or police garrisons during a period of seven years since 1996.

a) Dunai, *Dolpa (hills-mid-west)*
b) Salleri, *Solu (hills-east)*
c) Dang *(inner terai- mid west)*
d) Mangalsen, *Achham (hills- far west)*
e) Sindhuli *(eastern hills)*
f) Sandhikharka, *Arghakhanchi (hills-west)*
g) Rumjatar, *Okhaldhunga (hills-east)*
h) Lahan, *Siraha (terai-east)*
i) Khalanga, *Jumla (hills- mid-west)*

It is interesting to note that almost all of the attacks were in the hilly region of the country, mostly in the west, and there were only two attacks in the Terai (Lahan, Siraha) and the inner Terai (Dang).

a) Dunai, Dolpa, 25 October 2000

The attack on Dunai, headquarters of Dolpa district situated in mid western hills was the first attack on a district headquarters. Dolpa is a district situated just north of the area in Rapti Zone where the insurgency started. The police post and several government offices were destroyed and cash from bank amounting to Rs 6 million was looted. It was reported that 14 policemen were killed in the attack. However, the Army barrack just on the outskirts was not attacked and the army did not attack the insurgents either. According to an article published in a newsmagazine[1], the district administration was informed about the possibility of attack five days earlier but there were delays in sending arms to the police. Govinda Raj Joshi, Home Minister in Nepali Congress Government said the delay was because the RNA did not provide extra arms needed for the policemen. The Police were badly defeated and the insurgents were victorious.

b) Salleri, **Solukhumbu,** 23 November 2001

It was the first major attack in the headquarters of a district in the Eastern hills. It may be remembered that Solokhumbu is the district that contains Mount Everest and homeland of the Sherpas. The Maoists numbering 2,500 had come in four groups. They surrounded district level offices, police, banks and army barrack during midnight and the fighting continued till morning. Maoists attacked tower of Phaplu airport and destroyed many offices. Chief District Officer (CDO) and thirty-one policemen were killed. It was the first time in the insurgency when the CDO in any district had been killed. The insurgents looted the bank and left with Rs 15 million in cash and ornaments that were left as collateral in the bank. They also attacked District Court and destroyed documents. More than fifty bodies of insurgents were also found. It is estimated that more than 115 Maoists were killed in the fighting between Royal Nepal Army and the Maoists[2].

c) Ghorahi, Dang 23 November 2001

Dang valley is one of the two valleys situated in the inner Terai region of Nepal. It is similar to better known Dehra Doon Valley in India south of the Garhwal hills and Chitwan valley in Nepal further to the east. It is situated just south of the hilly region that is the epicenter of Maoist activity. It is precisely because of this factor that it is strategically located in the current conflict. The Maoist attack in this valley that marked the end of the first talks between the Government and Maoists in 2001 four months after it started.

It was the bloodiest attack to date in the insurgency. Most of district level buildings were gutted by fire. As talks with the Maoists were going on, the security forces were unprepared for this attack. Army barrack at Ghorahi was the main target of the attack. After "arresting" District Police Office and Chief District Officer, the insurgents used the vehicle used by chief of Police and dressed as policemen to enter the barrack whose gates were opened by the watchmen thinking the Policemen had come. After entry in the Barrack, the insurgents captured ammunition and carried it away in a truck. They bombed the barrack after leaving. The vehicle that they had used to attack the barrack was bombed and destroyed by the insurgents one kilometer away. The insurgents loaded the looted arms in three trucks they had taken over and fourteen passenger buses to head towards the hilly areas of Rapti Zone. They returned the captured trucks and buses from a place three kilometers away from Holleri.They even paid the bus drivers Rs 9,000 each as "fare". However, they destroyed the army truck that they had taken[3]. It was reported that 26 soldiers were killed. An attack on the police post in Dang killed nine policemen and some civilians. The insurgents looted Rs 64.8 million in cash and such precious metals as gold and silver from three local banks. The insurgents numbering thousands attacked and took the district headquarters under their control for some time when they continued to loot arms and ammunitions from army barrack. It was reported that the insurgents took 99 SLR and some machine guns[4].

d) Syangja Bazar, Syangja, 23 November 2001

When the Maoists were attacking Ghorahi in Dang valley, they also chose to attack another headquarters of a district situated just south of Pokhara in western hills. This town is located on the road from Pokhara to the Indian border constructed under Indian assistance in late 1960's. The insurgents killed 14 policemen in several police posts in the district. A retired General in the Indian army has called this attack as a "classic guerilla operation"[5]. It was reported that about 1500 Maoists surrounded Syangja situated on a road linking Pokhara with the Indian border during night and attacked the district level offices, banks and land revenue office. They fled without suffering any casualties.

e) Mangalsen, Achham, 23 February 2002

Mangalsen is the district headquarters of a backward district situated in Far Western part of the country situated west of Karnali River. The Maoists attacked both Mangalsen and Sanfebagar airport. The attack started at midnight. The Maoists destroyed one army platoon stationed at Mangalsen. It was one of the deadliest attacks by the Maoists in Nepal. Most of 137 persons killed including 57 soldiers, 49 policemen and civilians. 40 heads of unidentified people were found near the airport, believed to be those of insurgents [6]. It was reported that the Maoists used weapons that they had looted from Dang on November 2001. The insurgents also looted Rs 20 million from a bank in Mangalsen. The American Ambassador to

Nepal visited the site and described the Maoists as being similar to Khmer Rouge, Shining Path or the Al Quaida. The major reason for the success of the insurgents was the lack of intelligence. A columnist in a magazine reported, "That the 23 November Achham attack could take place at all and that a thousand-odd rebels could gather undetected in the surrounding villages before the attack, indicates that the army commanders had been taking the Maoist threat lightly". It added "the armymen seem to be gathering "intelligence" from the daily newspapers"[7]. The RNA started taking an "offensive stand" after this attack.

f) Satbaria, Lamahi, Dang, 12 April 2002

Maoists launched a series of attacks in several locations in Dang and Deukhuri valleys. The East-West Highway running across the length of Nepal passes through Deukhuri valley situated south of Dang valley. Satbaria in Deukhuri valley was the hometown of Home Minister Khum Bahadur Khadka where a newly formed Armed Police Force camp was located. The Police Force Camp was surrounded by the Maoists by 10PM who ensured that no re-inforcements could be brought from outside. They blew up the main road connecting Satbaria with Lamahi; electric power sub station at Lamahi was blown up. In addition, the Police Post on Lamahi was destroyed and the Inspector heading it was tortured and beheaded.

Two banks in Lamahi and the home of the Home Minister were robbed. It was reported that 150 persons died including 100 Maoists.[8]

g) Gam, Rukum, 8 May 2002

The village of Gam is situated in Rukum District, supposed to be the area where the Maoist insurgency started. The Maoist attack in Gam during midnight caused death of 119 security personnel including soldiers and policemen. It was reported that 2,000 Maoists were involved in the attack and 150 of who died. It was a temporary camp set by army in the core Maoist area only a month earlier. The insurgents are reported to have used automatic and modern weapons. Although a helicopter was sent the next day, it was not allowed to land till 430 PM.[9] The lessons learnt from this attack was that lack of air support and adequate weapons were the factors that led to the Maoists overrunning the RNA base.[10]

h) Rumjatar, Okhaldhunga, 28 October 2002

The village of Rumjatar in Okhaldhunga district is situated in the eastern hills and contains a large settlement of Gurungs who had migrated two centuries earlier during the process of Nepal's re-unification. It contains an airstrip. The town of Okhaldhunga, the district headquarters, is a Newar town. Maoists attacked both the district headquarters and the airport at night around 11

PM and the fighting continued till 4AM. Two night vision helicopters were sent immediately. Ministry of Defence reported that grenades, socket bombs and other weapons were used. Thirty- two Maoists are reported to be killed. The Maoist attack was totally repulsed[11]. It was reported to be a result of good intelligence gathering[12]. There was also "timely response" from Kathmandu that was a contributing factor for repulsing the attack. On the other hand, army commander was killed. The government forces came to know about the build up and movement of the Maoist forces three to four hours before the attack for which they were well prepared. There may be another crucial factor that led to failure of the Maoists in this case that has not been reported in the press. The village of Rumjatar has supplied many soldiers in the Nepalese army. Many of the workers in the Royal and Rana palaces have come from this village. The district where Rumjatar is located was also stronghold of Nepali Congress Party. Perhaps this was one of the factors by which there was less local support for the Maoists. Perhaps this was also a factor that facilitated gathering of intelligence.

i) Bhiman, Sindhuli, 8 September 2002

Bhiman is a small village along a road connecting Bardibas with Sindhuli between the eastern hills and the Terai. The Maoists attacked the police post there and killed 49 policemen. The attack took place around mid-night. They were reported to be commanding in an unintelligible language. They laid mines to obstruct a team of army and police that had come from the district headquarters at Sindhuli for help. Although it was claimed that forty insurgents were dead, only two bodies dressed in combat dress could be found. According to one policeman, the Maoists had taken laxatives and had killed even those policemen who had surrendered. The Maoists had also used women and children as "human shields". No night vision helicopter arrived during night, which could have helped to reduce damage [13].

f) Sandhikharka, Arghakhanki, 9 September 2002 [14]

The attack on Sandhikharaka was to take place just a day after attack on Bhiman in Sindhuli in Eastern Nepal and was reported to be especially vicious due to huge loss in property. Sandhikharka is the headquarters of Arghakhanchi district in Western Nepal. It is a new town set up in 1960's after a new district was carved out. Although it is situated just east of insurgency-affected areas in Rapti Zone, it had been left relatively untouched. This district had also produced several central level Maoist leaders. Being district headquarters, this town contained many district level offices of different offices. The Maoist attack started at 9P.M when the insurgents surrounded the entire town. A road linking the town had been made inaccessible by cutting trees. They had also banned persons from surrounding villages to visit the town before attack. They were using such powerful weapons as AK-47, SLR and LMG. They were divided in nine platoons before the attack[15]. A night vision helicopter sent at 3 A.M was attacked by the insurgents and was forced to land elsewhere. According sources in the Army, night vision helicopter had been requested at 10PM and had it arrived earlier some of the top Maoist leaders including Krishna Bahadur Mahara, Pampha Bhushal and Nanda Pun (Pasang) would have been killed[16]. It was also reported that seventeen soldiers were killed and thirty were forced to carry ammunitions from their barracks[17].

Most of twenty-five government-owned buildings were burnt partially or fully. It was estimated that the amount of loss was Rs 37 million. Vehicles costing Rs 26.7 million were destroyed and funds amounting to Rs 52.1 million were robbed. Money was also looted from different banks and Land Revenue office. The Maoists also looted all the arms from the barracks of the Army. A regional development project under assistance from the European Union called GARDEP (Gulmi Arghakhanchi Regional Development Project) is being implemented in the district. The Maoists destroyed a vehicle belonging to the project (costing Rs 5.7 million) in March 1998. The Maoists claimed that they took such action as the project was involved in corruption and was exploiting people[18]. This project also suffered heavy losses in the attack at Sandhikharka including two vehicles. While sources from the security forces claim that a large number of locals were used by the Maoists as "human shields" an independent journalist reported that this was not done. A district level political leader when asked about the attack reported that the security forces should have been aware of entrance of new people in the district. Royal Nepalese Army spokesperson admitted that intelligence failure was responsible for attacks[19]. It was reported that many unemployed youth from Rapti Zone had entered the district and were working on odd jobs on very low remuneration. They did most of such works in government offices and army barracks. It was later revealed that they were, in fact, Maoist leaders in disguise who had gathered information about Government officials and their activities. Most of the intelligence officers employed on the recommendation of political parties were incompetent [20]. According to another report, many of the armed insurgents were very dark and could not even speak Nepali[21]. Most of the insurgents were below nineteen and they had already set up health camps for the wounded before the attack. According to another report, the Maoists had already installed long-range weapons looted from army barracks in Dang in the hills surrounding the town that was not known by the Intelligence[22]

j) Khalanga, **Jumla**, 15 November 2002[23]

The attack on Khalanga in Jumla District was perhaps one of the most important ones in the course of insurgency. Khalanga is not only headquarters of Jumla district but the entire Karnali Zone, perhaps the most backward area of the country.". The strategy followed by the insurgents included surrounding the district headquarters and assault on all government buildings at the same time. Although the Maoists say ten thousand insurgents took part in the attack, the locals say the number was about five to six thousand. According to report from Human Rights Commission Team that visited the area after the attack there were Maoist guerillas not only from surrounding districts but also from the districts of Eastern Nepal as Ramechhap and Dolakha. Many people were also used as "human shields".

The attack took place during evening. About three-dozen government offices were destroyed. Other offices destroyed included the only high school in the town and the insurgents also robbed the local bank It was reported that thirty five policemen, four soldiers and four locals were killed. Government sources said one hundred five insurgents were also killed. Although attempts to capture the RNA barracks could not succeed, the insurgents took all the arms of the local police. The chief district officer was one of the dead.

Another interesting aspect about this attack was that there were reports one week earlier that an attack on Khalanga was about to take place. A large number of insurgents had gathered in different parts of the district and proceeded towards Khalanga. However, the local government probably had no idea of such an attack and did nothing to prevent it. This was partly due to failure of intelligence. What is intriguing is that the local administration did not know that a force of five to ten thousand insurgents was gathering for an attack on the town. Khalanga is not situated in a densely populated area and it should not have been difficult to know about unusual activity in the neighbouring villages before the attack. It is interesting to note that Baburam Bhattarai has claimed that the same Maoist army that attacked Arghakhanchi in September had also attacked Jumla situated more than 500 km away in hilly terrain almost two months later. He had asked, "How did the government with its vast security network not know about it?"[24]

k) Takukot, ***Gorkha,*** 15 November 2002

The Maoists attacked a police post killing 23 policemen. Takukot is situated about thirty kilometers north of district headquarters at Gorkha. About 500 insurgents attacked the police post situated in a hillock at 10 PM. The fighting continued till 1 PM and the insurgents fled after the arrival of night vision helicopter. The insurgents carried weapons of dead policemen[25].

(II) DESTROYING INFRASTRUCTUE

The Maoist insurgency in the initial phases enjoyed some support from the people as it envisaged to fight against corruption, rampant alcohol consumption and set up "People's Court" to expedite justice. However, five years after declaration of People's War, the insurgency had degenerated in some way as it had destroyed development infrastructure in the country. Maoist cadres have destroyed not only power plants supplying power to many areas of the country, but also bridges, buildings of local government called VDC's (Village Development Committees), courts and government owned vehicles.

A former Member of Parliament from CPN (UML) has written, "It is the Maoist terror tactics of extortion, abduction, murder, intolerance to differing opinions and destruction of development infrastructure that kept them from becoming more popular."[26] He has listed several reasons why the Government and the Maoists agreed to a cease-fire in his article.

Maoist leader Baburam Bhattarai stated in December 2002 that it was not the policy of his government to destroy physical infrastructure. However, he admitted that such incidents have taken place by lower level cadres knowingly or unknowingly. He said stern action would be taken against those responsible. However, he added that as long as "civil war" continues, it should not mean that attack on physical infrastructure that could be used by the government would stop[27].

An article written by a Raghu Pant, member of CPN (UML) in the dissolved Parliament in the local vernacular daily[28] gives interesting insights between Maoists in China in the 1940's and the Maoists in Nepal at the present time. According to him many Communist parties in different parts of the world in 1970's followed the policy of long-term people's war and "encircling towns from villages" inspired by ideas of Chairman Mao but failed to succeed. According to him, the Red Army in China did not extort money or foodgrain from the people and did not enter people's homes without permission. He concluded that Chairman Mao would have shed tears had he watched the bloodshed in Nepal. According to a military strategist,[29] military strategy of Mao in China has nothing in common with the Maoist strategy in Nepal and they had not followed this kind of violence in China. He concluded that the Maoists in China received popular support because of their policies. The Chinese call the Maoists in Nepal as "anti-Government forces". The Chinese President had condemned terrorist activity in Nepal during King Gyanendra's visit to Beijing in 2002 and had offered moral support in crushing the insurgency.

The following is a list of damages done by the Maoists on the physical infrastructure in the country. This list is by no means, all-inclusive. According to a news report, an estimate made by British aid agency DFID, the cost of rebuilding infrastructure lost during first 12 months of insurgency would be US$270 million[30].

Power Plants

It is interesting to note that most of the power plants for electricity supply by the Maoists are located in the remote hilly districts away from urban centers. They destroyed power plant of Jhimruk Hydro-electric Project (12 MW) in Rapti Zone situated near their "heartland" in April 2002[31]. They also attacked power plant in Andhikhola (5MW) in Syangja District south of Pokhara valley. The power plants were being operated by Butwal Power Company (BPC) almost all of which is owned by the Government. The monthly income of BPC was Rs 1.1 million. It was estimated that 30,000 consumers were deprived of electricity supply.

The Maoists attacked project site of rural electrification project at Khimti (63MW) in Dolakha district east of Kathmandu being implemented by Norwegian Agency for Development (NORAD) and Himal Power Limited. The cost of damage was estimated to be Rs 3.5 million and 1214 households were deprived of electricity supply[32]. They attacked and destroyed one of three generators of Jharke Microhydro Project that would have benefited 8,000 households.[33] The insurgents also attacked power plant of a micro hydroelectric plant for Bajhang district (capacity 200 kw). The amount of damage was estimated to be Rs 20 million and 1,000 households were left without electricity supply[34]. Kakarmod micro plant in southern part of Tanau district was also destroyed that was benefiting 400 persons were also destroyed causing damage worth Rs 12 million[35]. Other thing about such destruction of micro plants in Bhojpur and Okhaldhunga about that it included not only the ones set up by NEA (Nepal Electricity Authority, a semi-government body) but also those run by communities themselves. The powerhouse of Micro -hydro plant in Darchula situated in the backward hilly region of Western border area of Nepal was attacked by the Maoists resulting in interruption of power supply[36] Panauti Hydro-electric Plant situated just outside Kathmandu valley was attacked by an armed group of 50 Maoists on 25 November 2001. The damage was worth Rs 5.2 million.[37]

Telecommunications

Telecommunication infrastructure in the country was severely damaged by the Maoist attack. Telephone facilities in nineteen districts could not be restored even two months after cease-fire. It was estimated that Rs 560 million would be needed to repair the losses caused by the attack[38].

Government buildings in District Headquarters

The Maoists had consolidated their strength during the first talks with the Government in 2001. They destroyed many buildings in district headquarters immediately after talks broke down. This included district offices of road, irrigation, posts, Agricultural Implements Corporation and the only horticultural farm in the entire Far Western region. Government existed only in the district headquarter Patan and rest of the district was controlled by the Maoists. A Maoist visa was required to travel from villages in northern part to district headquarters[39].

Local Government (VDC and Municipality) buildings

Maoists targeted buildings of local government in the villages for destruction. It was reported that all VDC (Village Development Committee) buildings in the districts most affected by insurgency such as Rukum, Rolpa, Kalikot, Jajarkot and Salyan were destroyed. In Dang, 37 out of 38 VDCs were destroyed[40] It was reported that buildings 43 out of 62 VDCs in Baitadi district in westernmost part of Nepal were destroyed as soon as the first dialogue with the Maoists ended in November 2001.[41]

NGO Projects

Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) is one of the most successful projects in Nepal in the field of conservation and development and a part of King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (KMTNC). It has a network of field offices north of Pokhara in the most popular trekking areas of Nepal. Actually the success of ACAP in empowering Nepalese to manage their own resources and getting support of large number of tourists who visit the area is considered to be a textbook example in resource conservation and management. The Maoists attacked ACAP (Annapurna Conservation Area Project) offices in Bhujung May 2002. ACAP had assisted in such different activities as sanitation, drinking water, construction of small bridges and trails by forming groups. Maoists are reported to have said: "This is our area and you should work only with our permission". Armed Maoists visit the project site and ask for contributions[42]. The Maoists also destroyed KMTNC offices in three places in northern Gorkha[43]. They are reported to have asked Rs 3 million "donation" from Kanchenjunga Conservation Area Project in Taplejung in Eastern Nepal[44]. Maoists are reported to have set fire to a tourist resort in Pokhara valley[45]. There are also reports that extortion was also being done by "fake Maoists" in the name of the Maoists. Baburam Bhattarai, the Maoist leader had written an "open letter" to the tourists saying that they were welcome in Nepal and would not be targeted unless they happened to be in combat zone.

According to an estimate made by Dr Shankar Sharma, Vice Chairman of National Planning Commission, the total damage done by the Maoist insurgency was US$5 billion. He believes Nepal's economy was "saved" by remittances that Nepalese working overseas send to the country which is believed to be about US$1 billion annually[46].

(iii) Burning Books and Closing Schools

One of the special features of the Maoist insurgency in Nepal is its attack on Nepal as a Hindu state and what it calls the ethnic domination of Nepali speaking Khas (mainly Brahmins and Chhetris) in Nepal's polity. One of the demands made in the original 40 Point was for Nepal to be declared a secular state. There are a number of Sanskrit schools in Nepal where only Brahmins were allowed to study some fifty years ago. Although their doors are open to all now, there are few students from other communities studying there. Sanskrit was also one of the compulsory subjects in high schools. Although the two of the topmost leaders of the Maoists (Prachanda and Baburam) were both Brahmins who used Nepali language saturated with Sanskrit, they opposed teaching of compulsory Sanskrit in schools and the Maoists started a campaign of attacking Sanskrit schools during the insurgency.

Study of a movement called *Jayatu Sanskritam* (meaning *Let Sanskrit Truimph*) may provide background to Sanskrit education in Nepal in understanding Maoist attacks against Sanskrit. Literacy during the Rana regime in Nepal was less than 5 percent and was largely confined to the Brahmins. These students had the advantage because there were hostels where free room and boarding was made available to them. This was remarkable at a time when there were few schools and fewer hostels in the country. Those studying Sanskrit and living at subsidized hostels getting free shelter and food enjoyed a previlege in those days. However, the entrance to the hostels was open not to all Brahmins but only one particular group. They started a movement in 1947 when the Rana regime was in its final stage demanding that they be provided with modern education including teaching in such subjects as geography and history. A well-known Nepali writer Sharma has written,[47] " Thus all graduates of Sanskrit schools were counted on to be priests to perform religious rites, pundits to recite and interpret the *Puranas* and teachers to train boys in the dogmatic discipline of singular devotion to the political and social authorities". Although the student activitsts succeeded in their goal, they never made any effort to open the doors of Sanskrit education or the hostel itself to non-Brahmins. Sri Bhadra Sharma, one of the leaders of the movement has made exaggerated claims that the movement contributed to the success of 1950 Revolution that overthrew the Rana regime and was responsible for advent of democracy in the country. It is true that many of those involved in the movement did join the anti-Rana movement in later years, the movement itself did not envisage bringing democracy in the country. Had it been so they would have agitated for making access to Sanskrit education to all instead of limiting it to a particular group of Brahmins? Many of the participants in the movement such as Kamal Raj Regmi, Rajeshwar Devkota and Purna Prasad Brahmin occupied important posts in post-Rana Nepal. However, they did little to popularize Sanskrit among non-Brahmins. Sri Bhadra Sharma, in an article published more than half a century after the movement wrote[48] that he supported the tradition in *Teen Dhara Paksala,* the Sanskrit hostel, situated in the heart of Kathmandu under which only a particular group of Brahmins were admitted. Students from such different groups of Brahmins such as those from Far Western hills, Mithila in the south or even those speaking Newari from Kathmandu valley were still not admitted till the year 2002. There was no question then of admitting *Dalits* or *Janjatis.* However, this has changed now and the doors of the hostel are open to all, including *Dalits* and *Janjatis* who want to study Sanskrit. This demonstrates the double standards of those benefiting from free shelter and food, claiming to have brought democracy from their movement and still believing in continuation of privileged education solely for Brahmins. A *Janjati* activist, Bairagi Kainla[49] said a group of Brahmins have benefited in the past from a system of affirmative action or "reservation" as they could study Sanskrit without having to pay for room and board. This gave them unfair advantage compared to non-Brahmins.

Mahendra Sanskrit University is located in Dang valley just south of the Maoist 'heartland" in the mid-western hills. The local people had donated land for construction of the university. It was attacked and set on fire on May 2002[50] and many Sanskrit manuscripts and records of students were destroyed. Many of the manuscripts were priceless and contained records of cultural heritage of Hindus and Buddhists. The student union affiliated with the Maoists had caused explosion inside Vice-Chancellor's office in 2001. The Maoists tried to justify the attack saying that a large amount of country's resources were being used for benefiting a limited group of people, meaning that study of Sanskrit was the monopoly of the Brahmins[51]. It is interesting to note in this context comments by a leftist intellectual, a former Minister and member of CPN (UML) Modnath Prashrit. According to him this attack represented not only an attack on Hindu religion and civilization, but also the world of five thousand year old heritage, eastern culture, philosophy, history, culture, art and science. He was critical that the Maoists are regarding Hindu religion, caste system and Sanskrit learning as the same thing.[52] Doesn't this attack demonstrated Maoist's intolerance and also bring forth the similarity with Khmer Rouge's method of attacking the intellectual property of the people that could also be termed as cultural genocide?.

The Government was forced to change its policy regarding Sanskrit and it was no longer a compulsory subject in the schools from 2002. It was mainly because of pressure from the Maoists that such a step was taken. Government also announced in June 2003 that Sanskrit hostel at Teen Dhara Pathshala situated in the heart of Kathmandu would also admit *Dalits* and *Janjatis.*[53].

Report prepared by a team appointed by the Government found that there were more staff and teacher at MSU (Mahendra Sanskrit University) than students. There were only two regular students in one such campus of the university whereas the number of staff and teachers was 12. MSU owned considerable amount of land in Dang and Deukhuri valleys just south of insurgency affected areas but its total income was only Rs 8.4 million. It was receiving a grant of Rs 120 million from the government. Government was spending Rs 500,000 for education of one student at MSU for four-year degree course[54]. It's possible that such state of affairs and the education of Sanskrit being limited to one community played a role in Maoist attacks to the university. On the other hand, can attack on any educational institution and its library, a heritage of Hindus and Buddhists be justified?

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CHAPTER THREE

Voices from the Margin

(i) Women Join in Some Numbers — Voluntarily?

One of the interesting aspects of the Maoist insurgency in Nepal is the large number of women among its cadres. Maoist leader Baburam Bhattarai has stated that fifty percent of cadres at the lower level, thirty percent of soldiers and ten percent of members of central committee of the Party were women[1]. These figures may be somewhat exaggerated. A woman writer from Nepal who traveled to Dailekh and Jumla in Mid-Western Nepal disputes this claim calls such claims to be exaggerated[2]. According to her, all the Maoist females she met on her trip were girls aged less than 18 and not women. On the other hand, Durga Pokhrel, Chairman of National Women's Commission who visited more than 25 districts affected by insurgency stated the percentage could be as high as 40.[3] However, the numbers still seem to be significant in a traditional society like that of Nepal. The reasons could be lack of response from the state for demands of women's legal equality, political participation and empowerment. However, only one among forty points of the original demands of the Maoists in 1996 dealt with women as it said, "Girls should be given equal property rights as that of their brothers". On the other hand, new seventy-five-point programme announced by the Maoists at the time of dialogue with the Government in 2003 includes three points dealing specifically with women's issues, which are in addition to the original demands. These include "end of exploitation of women in a patriarchial society, reservation for women in all branches of government, ban on all kinds of prostitution and end of such practices as "Badi" and "Jhuma". Severe punishment will be given to rapists and those involved in trafficking of women. No marriage will be permitted between men and women except on the basis of love and free will and will not be permitted on the basis of tradition and coercion. Widow re-marriage will be encouraged. Father and mother will have to bear "two thirds" and "one third" responsibility of looking after a child respectively[4]. According to a speech given by Baburam Bhattarai in April 2003, women were to be given fifty percent seats in all decisive places of the state[5]

A woman soldier interviewed by a foreign journalist stated exploitation of women in addition to corrupt politicians and the caste system were the reasons why she jointed the insurgency as a soldier[6]. According to an article[7] after visiting three mid western districts where the Maoists declared the formation of "People's Government", an important change was gender equality, at least among the Maoist cadre in a traditional society where women had to suffer many disadvantages. And have encouraged widow re-marriage. As many men were killed during insurgency, it is the Maoists who take care of farming in such households. Women have been involved in several important fields, especially in agriculture and co-operatives. Kalikot district is divided in two parts by Karnali River. Maoists destroyed five suspension bridges linking two parts of the districts. According to some women, the Maoists did so to "save women from rape, murder and robberies". It is yet to be verified if the writer is telling the truth.

Durga Pokhrel,[8] chairman of National Women's Commission of Nepal found that the reason why a large number of women belonging to Tharu ethnic group joined the insurgency was primarily because of inhumane treatment given to them by the landlords that included "being forced to sleep with the landlord on the first night". According to her "women were being seen as an object with no identity of their own" which led them to take up the gun. Almost all women carrying guns were in the age group 15-24. Some of the reasons for women joining the insurgency were " right to choose a husband, non-delivery of services by district governments, lack of social protection of women in communities, attractionof the revolutionary culture and lifestyle"[9] .An account given by a sixteen year old Tharu woman from Kailali district[10] throws light on how some women were treated after joining the Maoist insurgency. One elderly Tharu woman came to her village and ordered that one man and one woman each from every household must accompany her. She said they formed groups of five or six and visited many villages in Bardia and Kailali districts. They used to sleep during night in different villages. It was permissible to sleep with whomever one wanted to. They were told, "We are fighting for the Proleterian, and We are Maoists. Land will belong to whoever tills it. When our revolution will succeed, everyone will be equal. Those without land will be given land". Most of the landlords were migrants from the hills. They were told to raise slogans against migrants from the hills. As the Tharus were backward, she joined the Maoists as she thought it would be helpful in ending poverty. One woman was required to have sexual relations with four to five men. Any resistance was considered an act of indiscipline.

Mina Acharya, a woman scholar believes the Maoist insurgents have succeeded in taking up issues raised by women activists and winning over a large section of women in the rural areas by integrating it with class struggle[11]. Kalikot district in mid-western hills is supposed to be a stronghold of the Maoists since late 1990's. The situation of women was very backward in the district as they were exploited economically and had to suffer due to sexual exploitation, Jari system of marriage and other social evils. Maoists organized the women. The lower caste women were the first ones to be so organized. They have helped reduce child marriage and other marriages such as *Jari, which* means eloping with a married woman and paying compensation to the first husband. Although it is difficult to say according to an article[12] it is difficult to say whether situation of women changed because of involvement of Maoists or because most leaders in the district were Maoists. On the other hand, there is also an element of coercion that is forcing women to join the Maoists. According to news report from a village of Dhanauli in Dang valley (Maobadi le laijane darle chhori lukaunu parchha (Daughters have to be hidden because of fears of kidnapping by the Maoists)[13] one person reported that the

Maoists were forcing his twelve year old daughter to join them. Another couple was worried about their only daughter being asked to join the Maoists. The report said all families having "well grown and good looking" teens were having similar problems. Another news report in a Nepali daily (Maobadi ma ladne bhanda yaun shoshan garne badhi (There is more sexual exploitation than fighting among the Maoists)[14] talked about abduction of girls from a school in Nawal Parasi who were forced to carry guns and were victims of sexual exploitation. Eighty out of 214 cadres parading in Dadajheri were girls aged fourteen to seventeen and belonged mostly to Magar community. They said they had to carry guns and satisfy sexual appetites of the insurgents. A woman student in Gulmi campus in West Nepal reported, "Thousands of women were forced to join the insurgency and exploited sexually". A woman who had been a Maoist for two years and surrendered to Army said she was raped by two cadres and added that her years as insurgent were violent and not very pleasant.[15] Maoist women arrested by the Army in Dang narrated tales of rape by Maoist male cadres including two women aged twelve and fifteen.[16]

A woman from Kalyanpur in Surkhet district stated that women working with the Maoists have been made means of entertainment of leaders of party and military wing. Another woman from Jumla stated, " Women have to suffer torture if they are not ready for physical contact with commander or guerillas".[17] A report from Surkhet said girl students were quitting school as they were afraid of being forced to join insurgency[18] Another report from the district tells how more than a thousand men and women left their villages as the Maoists were asking one man or woman from each household to join them and it was feared that they'd be used as "human shields" during attacks[19].

An article by Comrade Parvati (which is *nom de guerre* of Babu Ram Bhattarai's wife Hisila Yemi), who is a member of leadership of Maoist movement states, "exclusively women's guerilla squads have been constituted". According to her, the Maoist movement had given "dignified alternative" to women and blames "state sponsored Hindu religion" for women's oppression. According to Mandira Sharma, the reason why the Maoists enjoyed support among women was that their organization was very responsive to women's issues that encouraged their participation. However, she concluded that many people participated in Maoist activities out of fear rather than choice and that the Maoists were "producing a culture of violence in rural Nepal" (cited in a report to DFID entitled "Gender Dimensions of the "People's War in Nepal" by M. Sharma). Studying the Maoists among the Gurungs, Pettigrew found that both men and women were in positions of authority among the Maoists as both lead squads of combatants and organize propoganda campaigns.[20] On the other hand, what Gurung men found shocking was that many Gurung women were also involved. A survey of women who had migrated to Kathmandu from the Maoist affected areas in Sidhuli, Dhading and Solo Khumbu districts by a NGO found that many were working as waitresses in cabin restaurants and massage parlours. They had left their homes as the Maoists were forcing them to carry guns and join them[21]. The Maoists have also agreed to allow "co-habitation once a month" for their married prisoners who are under their custody.[22]

No woman was included in the five- member team appointed by the Maoists for dialogue with the Government in March 2003. On the other hand, Government had appointed a woman member in its team. a woman writer[23] wrote that speakers in public rallies in Kathmandu after the cease-fire were all men. This was in spite of the claims that upto 40 percent of Maoist forces were women. She wondered if the "so called women leaders in their team who are reputed to have gone side by side with their male colleagues both as life and political partners chose themselves not to come to the forefront, or as usual, they were pushed back?".

Actually, no woman has ever become head of state or government in any communist state in the world. Such political leaders as Indira Gandhi, Sirimavo Bandarnaike and Margaret Thatcher became heads of state or government in non-communist systems. However, women in former communist states such as Uzbekistan, Kazhakistan, Kirghizia, Tazikhistan and Turkmenia are more liberated than their co-religionists in Afghanistan, Iran or Pakistan.

(ii) Is the Participation of Dalits a Case of Empowerment?

Dalits or those treated as "untouchables" have supplied a large number of cadres to the Maoist insurgency in Nepal. They received degrading treatment at the hands of the so-called high castes throughout the centuries. It was only in tells how more than a thousand men and women left their villages as the Maoists were asking one man or woman from each household to join them and it was feared that they'd be used as "human shields" during attacks[19].

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1964 that the law abolished untouchability. Their situation does not seem to have improved much in thirty years of Panchayat era (1960-90) or during twelve years (1990-2002) of multi-party system under the Constitution promulgated in 1990. Dalits in Nepal had the lowest HDI (Human Development Index) in Nepal, according to United Nations Human Development Report in 1998. If the per capita income of the Newar was Rs 11,933, of occupational castes including the Dalits it was only 764. If adult literacy ratio for the Brahmin was 58, it was only 23 for the Dalit.[24]

It is possible that the legacy of discrimination and backwardness was one of the factors that led many Dalits joining the Maoist insurgency. Baburam Bhattarai, the Maoist leader has written about "positive contribution" of Dalits in dismantling old regime. According to him, the participation of Dalits in such districts as Kalikot in Mid-west was very significant. He concludes that participation of Dalits played a great role in the movement[25]. It is important in this context to examine what the Maoists had promised for Dalit emancipation. The Maoist's 40-point demands made in 1996 declared, "The status of dalits as "untouchables" and the system of untouchability ended once and for all".[26] It is interesting to note that there was nothing new in this point as the system of untouchability had already eradicated by law by that time although it was still prevalent. However, the Dalits had remained backward as there was not a single Dalit minister, member of lower house of parliament, judge or high ranking officer in army or police[27] in 2000. On the other hand, Nepali Congress Government formed a National Dalit

Commission in March 2002. The Maoist's 75- point program declared before beginning of dialogue with the Government in 2003 included two points dealing specifically with the Dalits. It declared end of all exploitation against Dalits and those practicing untouchability would face criminal charges. It also said a special program of "special rights", presumably reservations will be started for them till they are in the same status as others.[28] It appears that the Maoists were advocating reservations for Dalits as found in India. There are seats in the Indian Parliament that are reserved for Dalits. Elections are held on the reserved seats whose candidates could only be from the Dalits although voting could be done by all communities registed to vote in the constitutency. There are also reservations in the civil service for Dalits. The Maoist leaders have also advocated representation for Dalits in proportion to the population of the country. A Dalit pressure group consisting of a group of Dalit NGOs has presented a ten point agenda to the Maoists including formation of special court to review cases of untouchability, formation of National Dalit Commission as an autonomous body and total eradication of untouchability.[29] However, none of the members nominated by the Maoists for a dialogue with the Government in April 2003 were Dalits. Baburam Bhattari has claimed that there is more participation of Dalits among the Maoists than any other political party in the country. Not only are there many Dalits in the Maoist army but also many commanders have been Dalits. There is also proportional representation of Dalits in local level "janasarkars" (People's Governments)[30] An article by a Chairman of Dalit Mukti

Morcha in a weekly affiliated with the Maoists[31] says, "Maoists are the only party that is fighting for Dalit liberation. According to the article, caste system and untouchability have been declared crimes. Model areas under new government have been declared "untouchability free areas". In areas where there was a saying in old days that if Dalits were to be given milk or yogurt, cows and buffaloes would climb trees, people are inviting Dalits in their kitchens, inter- caste marriages are encouraged. According to the article untouchability in 75% of "base areas" controlled by the Maoists has been eradicated. It blames caste system, Hindu religion and feudal state system for Dalit problem.

A fact- finding mission of National Dalit Commission toured four districts affected by insurgency in January 2003. These included Rukum, Argha Khanchi, Achham and yangja in the hills and Dang, Kailali and Banke in the Terai. It found atrocities committed by the army against Dalits on the suspicion of being Maoists that included extra-judicial killings, setting fire to the homes etc. There was also one instance when a Dalit was kidnapped from his home by the Maoists and executed. The Report of Commission concluded, "Dalit community that had been suffering atrocities of caste based untouchability, poverty and illiteracy is also made the target of security forces indirectly"[32]

Dr. Thomas A. Marks, a leading expert on insurgencies has said about the Maoist insurgency in Nepal- has said that the leadership in the Maoist insurgency in Nepal consists of the members of elite. On the other hand, the fighting cadre sonsists of Dalits and ethnic groups. Accordingt to him there is also a strong presence of women and the the foot soldiers in the "people's army who have come ofrom the lower castes and small tribes have been given authority over the higher castes. He believes it to be a "caste war" and not only a political struggle.[33] According to a column published in a Kathmandu daily, the number of Dalits who have been killed as accused of being Maoists, being actually Maoists and in the conflict is quite larg.[34] Dalit Morcha, an organization affiliated with the Maoists demanded not only special rights for Dalits (presumably affirmative action or reservations) but also compensation to be guaranteed under a new constitution[35].

Although Dalits make up only 11 percent of population of Nepal according to 2001 census, they make up a large proportion of population in mid-western and far-western hills where the center of gravity of the Maoist insurgency is located. Actually, the proportion of *Janjatis* in eighteen hill districts between Bheri in the east and Mahakali in the west is very small. An overwhelming majority of population in these districts consists either of high caste Hindus such as Brahmins, Chhetris and Thakuris on one hand and Dalits on the other. The high caste Hindus make up the majority of population in each of these districts. These districts are also the most backward among seventy-five districts of Nepal based on such criteria such as per capita income, literacy, accessibility, women's empowerment etc. As the gap between the high caste people and the Dalits is wide all over the country, it must be even wider in the most backward part of the country. This must be the reason why so many of the Dalits joined the insurgency. On the other hand, Terai Dalits who form a quarter of the total Dalit population in the country have not shown a tendency to join the insurgency to the same degree. This is also the case with non-Dalit Madhises living in the Terai. Dilliram Dahal, a sociologist has stated in a paper[36] at a Conference recently held in Kathmandu " There is little transformation in Dalit's economic life even today simply because the total efforts of their development were directed to impeach other cultures, particularly the Hindu regime, caste values and hierarchial model". According to him certain groups among Dalits and Terai Dalits have made considerable progress economically and some have even objected to their classification as Dalits. One of the paradoxes among the Dalits is that it was customary for some Dalits to be considered higher in caste hierarchy than others. A blacksmith (*Bishwakarma*) was considered higher caste than a cobbler (*Sarki*).

The participation of Dalits in the insurgency is quite high. As Dalits are part of society in which they were not treated farily they might have found life as guerillas supposed to be practicing egalitarian norms a different experience than what they had been used previously. Some affirmative action or reservations for a limited period of time in Government irrespective of whoever comes to power in the future in Nepal seems to be the only solution for removing backwardness and alienation among the Dalits.

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CHAPTER FOUR

Living with the Legacy

> "It is the right of our cadres to ask for contributions in the villages"
>
> -Ram Bahadur Thapa Badal
> Addressing a meeting in Sindhuli
> after cease-fire (Rajdhani, 15/6/03)

(I) TAXATION OR EXTORTION?

According to an article published in *Far Eastern Economic Review*[1], the Maoists in Nepal is one of the wealthiest insurgencies in Asia. It quotes Deepak Thapa, a Nepalese expert on the insurgency that the Maoists have collected between Nepalese Rs 5 to Rs 10 billion ($64 million to $128 million) by extortion, "revolutionary tax", contributions from the Nepalese diaspora and bank robberies. Babu Ram Bhattarai, the Maoist leader has said that the source of financing of the Maoists is people. He has admitted taking "tax" from businessmen and industrialists and occasionally from Banks[2]. The Maoists are reported to have collected "contributions" from schoolteachers, government officials and businessmen ranging from Rs 100 to Rs 10,000 in Palpa district[3]. It was reported that Maoists were imposing a "tax" ranging from Rs 50 to 100,000 in each household in Likhu area in Ramechhap and Okhaldhunga districts in eastern hills.[4]

Maoists are taking control of large agricultural farms in Rajapur area of Bardia district and mobilizing villagers for rice transplantation. This is an example of collective farming and no payment is given[5]. Maoists also continued looting tractors, vehicles and foodgrains from large landholders in western district of Kailali. As the revolutionary student arm of the Maoists had announced that land belonging to large landowners would be confiscated and forty tractors were looted. These were being used in transporting arms, looted food grains and their own cadres across the district. The fuel needed for captured tractors are being extorted from petrol pumps. Most of the affluent landowners shifted to urban areas such as district headquarters in Dhangadhi[6]. Some Maoist leaders under the leadership of Bhagiram Tharu "Yug" were beaten up and killed when he was visiting a primary school at Bagaidah in Banke district[7].

The Government was providing Rs 500,000 for development to all VDCs Khotang District in eastern hills. However, the Maoists were extorting Rs 50,000 from this amount. Those who protested were beaten up and their property was confiscated[8].

Situation after Second Cease-fire in January 2003

One of the main features of 22-point Code of Conduct signed by the Government and the Maoists in 13 March 2003 was that there would be no forced contribution or "extortion". However, there are many reports that such extortion is still continuing.

In Sindhuli district in the eastern hills, the Maoists are reported to be collecting food grains and cash as contribution. They are also prohibiting transport of foodgrains from villages to markets. Contractors have been forced to pay minimum wage to the workers.[9] A headmaster of a school in Kailali district in Far Western Terai was asked to pay Rs 600,000 and was threatened. The school was closed[10]. According to reports from Surkhet district in mid-west, Maoists are continuing to demand contributions from businessmen, industrialists, teachers, government officials and general public. Large businessmen were being asked to give contributions between Rs 50,000 to 100,000. Farmers were being asked to give contributions in kind[11]. In Rolpa district the insurgents are demanding "tax" from businessmen amounting to Rs 1000 for a "permit" for doing business[12] . The Maoists are still reported to be extorting and forcing the subsistence farmers to feed them in Rukum district situated in their "heartland"[13]. RNA has accused the Maoists that extortion was continuing in the adjoining district of Jajarkot[14] Teachers in Salyan were required to pay a "contribution" of one day's salary to the Maoists. They were also reported to be collecting contributions in kind.[15]

A dozen armed Maoist workers were arrested in Janakpur as they were asking for donations[16]. The Maoists are reported to be extorting foodgrains forcibly from Santada area in Achham district in Far West[17]. Maoists were reported to be collecting donations from in Baglung district.[18] A report from a part of Kailali district that had no presence of Government is said to be under Maoist People's Government. Maoists are reported to be visiting homes to collect "tax" but have not taken any action against dacoits or thieves.[19] In other instances, the "People's Liberation Army" of the Maoists are reported to have helped people recover looted items from homes in Janakpur area in eastern Terai.[20] In Gorkha, home district of Maoist leader Baburam Bhattarai there were reports that extortion in cash and kind were taking place by the Maoist cadres not only in rural areas but also in the city of Gorkha itself. This was done in order to collect money for organizing the first "open talk" by Baburam Bhattarai in June 2003.[21] There were reports of kidnapping and beating of persons who refused to give "donations" to Maoists in Mahottari, Dolakha, Pokhara and Kabre districts[22].

The Maoists are reported to have asked a "donation" of Rs 10 million from FNCCI and Rs 5 million each from Kathmandu Metropolitan City and garment industries. They are also reported to be conducting training activities for commandos and guerillas taking advantage of cease-fire.[23] The Maoists are reported to have asked Association of Garment Producers for a contribution of Rs 20 million. When the Garment Producers expressed their inability to pay such a huge amount in view of decline in business, they were threatened that their industry would have to face strike. Many producers went out of business, as they did not have resources to pay "tax" to the Maoists.[24] Maoists are reported to have asked Rs 10 million as "contributions" from industrialists, businessmen, government officials and others. Spokesman of Maoist Talk Team Krishna Bahadur Mahara said that the insurgents were asking for contributions from corrupt, commission agents and smugglers. He said that action would be taken against security personnel trying to provide protection to them[25] Another weekly newspaper reported that contribution ranging from Rs 2.5 million to Rs. 20 million was being demanded from a group of businessmen importing foreign goods from airport[26]. It may be remembered that postings at Kathmandu's Tribhuwan Airport are very much in demand. When the Indian Airlines aircraft flew from Kathmandu was hijacked and ended up in Taliban ruled Kandahar in December 1999, there are speculations that a lot of money must have changed hands.

The Maoists are reported to have sent letters to Royal Palace officials asking for a contribution of Rs 10 million[27]. The Maoists also expressed their intention to impose fine of Rs 100,000 to nursing homes that had refused to treat their cadres who were wounded[28].

Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve Area is located north of epicenter of insurgency-affected area in Rapti Zone. The office of hunting reserve was shifted to Baglung because of security situation and the Maoists are reported to be "managing" the reserve. Maoists are also reported to be "collecting" royalty from herbs known as *Yarsagumba,* used as aphrodisiac and for other uses in India, Tibet and Southeast Asia. A local contractor exported *Yarsagumba* amounting to Rs 26.6 million to Tibet in 2002 and paid Rs 1.6 million as "royalty" to the Maoists[29]. Another report about collection of *Yarsagumba* from Dolpa District said the Maoists were collecting taxes and issuing "trade guidelines". Maoists are reported to be collecting *yarsagomba* themselves and selling it in the market. Maoists are reported to have Rs 5,000 per kilo as tax whereas the government tax was Rs 20,000 per kilo. This price of this product in local market is Rs 100,000 per kilo and that

Maoists are reported to be collecting "tourist tax" from foreign tourists in Rolwaling area east of Kathmandu. Each tourist has to pay Rs 2,000 as tax in an area where the government does not seem to exist. American and British tourists have also been "misbehaved" and have been searched by the Maoists.

Many insurgent groups in India such as *People's War Group* in Andhra Pradesh and *ULFA* are also reported to be extorting money in a similar fashion as the Maoists.

A million dollar question is what has happened to all the money looted from banks and extorted from businessmen, teachers and ordinary Nepalese since 1996. The Maoists have looted Rs 250-300 million from public banks during the period of insurgency. Krishna Bahadur Mahara, member of Maoist Politbureau and dialogue team with the Government says that they are willing to account at the appropriate time, for every paisa of funds thus collected[30].

(II) LIFE IN THE MAOIST -RULED AREAS

Maoist Visa Needed for Traveling to Some Areas

The Maoists rule the rural areas in many of the districts in hilly region of Mid-Western and Far-Western Nepal. The only areas under the control of the Government in Kathmandu are the district headquarters. Maoists have set up their own *Janasarkar* or People's Government in areas under their control called "Base Areas". They have also set up their own "People's Courts" where justice is supposed to be speedy.

Not only foreigners but also Nepalese are required to get "visa" or permit in order to enter a Maoist ruled territory. In the Maoist heartland in Rolpa district "permits" are needed to travel from one VDC to other. Some affected people have stated that people traveling without permits may also be accused of being informers.[31] In Salyan district adjoining Rolpa no one can travel to district headquarters under government control without a Maoist permit. According to a correspondent[32], the Maoists are also visiting schools and pressurizing to introduce communist educational system, extorting money and recruiting one person per family. Permit issued by the Maoists is needed for traveling from one village to another in remote Humla district of Karnali Zone. They have set up a "model government" in five VDCs in the southern part of Humla. They have also set up collective farms. "Model Government" also issues visas for travel to district headquarters. Permission of this government is also required for getting married.[33] The Maoists have introduced an internal visa system in Dailekh District of Bheri Zone. The locals need such permit not only traveling outside the district but also traveling to district headquarters at Narayan Bazar, under Government control. Details such as the purpose of journey outside village, duration of stay has to be written while applying for such "permit"[34].

The Maoists were recruiting people in their guerilla force following the principle of "one household, one person" in Parbat district. Many people have fled their homes because of such requirement.[35]

New Developments after Cease-fire in January 2003

It is interesting to note that Maoist activities that were specifically prohibited in Code of Conduct signed between them and the Government are still continuing in many parts of the country. Although Maoist activities in eastern hills limited before cease-fire, seem to be gathering momentum in Bhojpur in the eastern hills. The presence of government is limited to district headquarters. The village level local self-governing unit known as VDC (Village Development Committee) has been re-named as VPC (Village People's Committee) in Bhojpur[36]. There are reports of collection of "donations" by force in different VDCs of Doti and Dadeldhura in Far West and Salyan district in mid-West[37]. Maoists are strengthening and extending their influence after declaration of cease-fire. "Forced donations" are still continuing.

A report from Rukum district in Maoist heartland said many people are yet to be convinced that the Maoists have given up violence. Dev Gurung, one of the members of "dialogue team" delivered a speech there but neither expressed regret nor remorse for innocent victims of people's war[38]. There are also reports that the Maoists in some places have helped recover looted items from robbers in Dhanusha district in the Terai.[39] Myagdi is a district located west of Pokhara and has a large population of Magars. They normally drink alcohol. The People's Government (Janasarkar) set up by the Maoists in the district have banned the sale and consumption of not only alcohol but have destroyed beer and whiskey being sold in the shops[40]. A team of journalists including those from BBC was "detained" in Rolpa district, as they did not have Maoist "permit" to travel there.[41]

Some leaders of UML who had gone to visit Kalikot district in Karnali Zone without taking permission of the Maoists were "abducted and imprisoned".[42] The Maoists have reportedly made a "model area" in northeastern part of Jajarkot district. There are eight VDCs in the area and each contains offices of "Janasarkar" (People's Government). These offices decide whether "Janakarwai" (actions) are to be taken to collect "taxes" regularly and to take into account any problems in their areas. The villagers are also involved in "communal farming" in their area. Many affluent people in the area have have left the village.[43]

A People's Government was declared in Surkhet district in Mid-Western Nepal in June 2003. The chief of People's Government told journalists that any development to be undertaken in their area of control by the government would have to be in co-operation with their government. However, the "old regime" meaning the government in Kathmandu will not be allowed to work without their permission.[44]

The RNA started setting up a number of health camps in areas under Maoist control to provide free health facilities to the people. Maoists had set up their "model area" in Jajarkot district, one of the most Maoist affected areas in Nepal. They had prohibited entry of outsiders in the area without their permission. RNA sent a number of soldiers and policemen as well as civilians for this purpose. There was shooting when the Maoists started firing at the group resulting in death of seven Maoists.[45]

Maoists were reported to be recruiting young children (some as young as ten) during cease-fire in Taplejung district in eastern hills.[46] A report from Jumla, one of the districts most affected by insurgency said that workers of political parties could not go to villages beyond the district headquarters, as Maoist cadres would stop them.[47] Almost all of buildings of local government called VDCs were destroyed by The Maoists in Darchula district in far western part of Nepal bordering India and none were operating except in district headquarters four months after cease-fire.[48] A small market town situated south of Deukhuri valley along the Indian border was reported to be under the Maoists. All the government offices were under the Maoists who were were in charge of customs offices. They are also engaged in communal farming. They had also formed "People's Government there". The insurgents had attacked the police post in the border town in December 2002.[49] The Maoist government in Piuthan district had declared a budget of Rs 2.5 million for 2003 according to news reports.[50]

The Maoists in Achham district have prohibited organizations receiving money from the Americans to work there unless they receive a "commission." An organization called CARE NEPAL was allowed to work there as it was co-ordinating its activities with the Maoists.[51]

Judicial Functions and the Maoists

Maoists have started judicial functions in Salyan district in Mid-west. In one such case, the police initiated action. The Maoists who are now reported to be taking action themselves kidnapped the accused. Villagers are continuing to migrate out of the country even after cease-fire. These include those who had become Maoists.

"People's Courts" are continuing to function due to decreasing credibility of court system and "pressure" applied by the Maoists many people are withdrawing litigation from government courts and going to "People's Courts" instead. Such reports were received from Dhanusha district in the Terai inhabited largely by Madhise people, normally not known to be a Maoist stronghold.[52] The Maoists in Kapilvastu district of the Terai took another "Jana karabahi" or People's Action when the Maoist People's court fined, between Rs 40,000 to Rs 100,000 to three persons accused of murder and rape.[53]

Maoist People's Court in Piuthan district has punished a couple for adultery. The woman gave birth to a child born from illicit relationship when her husband was away. She killed the child and buried it in the forest. When the husband returned, he complained to the People's Court and asked for a divorce. The woman and her paramour were sentenced to three year forced labour for their crimes.[54]

The Maoists have "punished" a headmaster of a school in Ilam situated in eastern hills of Nepal for having embezzled funds and having had illicit relations with a woman.[55] A man was "beaten up" on charges of rape.[56] A clerk in a district court in Kathmandu valley was abducted by the Maoists as he had refused to get married to a girl he was engaged to and the girl filed a petition in *Janadalat* (People's Court).[57]

An official of CPN (UML) abducted by the Maoists was released in Kaski district after he pleaded guilty to a charge that he had extorted Rs 1.8 million after promising to return the extorted money. He was accused of having extorted the money from businessmen in Palpa, Tanahu and Kaski districts.[58]

The Maoists seized 25 *bighas* of land belonging to Ram Janaki Temple Trust (called "Guthi" in Nepali) and distributed it to landless Dalits in Mahottari district in the Terai. According to reports in a newspaper, this was the first time in eastern Terai that such a seizure and re-distribution had been done. This land was being given in contract for farming for Rs 1 million annually by Mahottari Guthi Sansthan since the past decade but most of it was being embezzeled by concerned officials. The significant aspect of this episode is that it happened in eastern Terai largely populated by Madhises where the Maoists did not have much influence in the past.[59] Maoists were reported to have arrested professional thieves and pickpockets in Mahottari district and handed them over the the Police.[60] . Maoists are reported to have arrested fake Maoists who were robbing cash and jewellery in different parts of Tanahu district and sent them to "labour camps".[61] ccording to a report published by the Supreme Court of Nepal, the number of lawsuits registered in the courts of Nepal decreased in the year ending in July 2002. Among the reasons for such decrease could be litigation being lengthy and expensive and the setting up of Maoist People's Courts.[62]

The Maoists have taken advantage flaws of the judicial system existing in Nepal that is characterized by pervasive corruption and delays to to start their own judiciary. This is the reason why litigation in Government Courts has shown a decreasing trend. No study has yet been made about "fairness" of the trial conducted by the Maoists.

III) MAOIST INCLINED LITERATURE FROM NEPAL

Some study of literature of Maoist literature that could be defined as literature written by those sympathetic to the Maoist cause is essential to understand the Insurgency in Nepal. Nepali language has a long history of protest literature, and poetry and politics has remained inseparable in Nepal over the decades[63]. It is beyond the scope of this book to write in detail about such a vast area.

Briefly speaking, Modern Nepali lierature had its beginnings in 1935 when a literary journal *Sharada* was published in Kathmandu. According to literary critic Tara Nath Sharma[64], literature has been an effective tool in bringing political consciousness among the people. He believes literature of 1930s and 40s contributed to success of Revolution in 1951 that ended the Rana regime. Gopal Prasad Rimal started a tradition of writing *Gadya Kavita* or prose poems attempting to raise the voice of the agony of the people during the final days of the Rana regime in mid-twentieth century. Such writers as Bhupi Sherchan, Parijat, Shailendra Sakar and Bimal Nibha wrote against the despotic Panchayat System ruling Nepal for three decades starting from the 1960's. Other poets included Krishna Bhakta Shrestha, Bairagi Kainla, Kundan Sharma, Kali Prasad Rijal and Ishwar Ballabh. Not all of them were Marxists. Poets belonging to diverse groups and political ideologies launched several literary movements during Partyless Panchayat Regime. Tesro Aayam, Boot Polish, Aswikrit Smaj (Movement of Discarded Cmmunities) and Sadak Kavita Andolan etc. were launched.

There was a surge in literary activity after a decade of Popular Movement in 1990. However, there was also disenchantment due to lack of performance from democratically elected Government, pervasive corruption and rampant corruption. A new modernist movement called "Content Metamophosis" was to start in the beginning of the new millennium. The word employed by writers for such words as human rights, democracy and nationalism now convey a different meaning now. Meaning of new diction, dream visions and fast changing images of Nepali society was also being re-interpreted that challenged old established literary institution and individuals. Democratic and non-Maoist poets such as Shailendra Sakar and Yuyutsu R.D.Sharma started this Movement.

But in Marxist circles, a magazine called *Kalam* (meaning Pen in Nepali) published literature of many Maoist poets and writers in Nepal. Many of the stories published in this magazine after 1996 when the insurgency started have reflected Maoist Movement[65]. One of the better-known writers of Maoist literature in Nepal was Krishna Sen "Ichhuk" who edited the literary magazine *Kalam* and weekly *Janadesh* and daily *Janadisha*. The reason why he is better known could be because of his journalistic career and the circumstances relating to his death.

Sen was born on 1956 in Dehradun, India where his father was working for the Indian Army. He was living in Dang district of Nepal. He is essentially a poet and has admitted this fact[66]. He was imprisoned for more than five years during Panchayat era between 1982 and 1987. He was arrested in 1996 and was charged of having published news about the insurgency that had just started. He wrote such poetry as "*Itihas ko yas ghari ma*" and "*Chandragiri*" when he was jailed. Although he was released, he was re-arrested in May 2002 and was allegedly tortured and killed while in police custody when Emergency was imposed in the country according to some reports[67].

One critic[68] calls Sen as a "cultural soldier" and was fighting in favour of the poor all his life. His first published poetry (1992) is "*Shokanjali*" written when he was imprisoned in Ghorahi, Dang and deals with his friend Mitramani Acharya who was allegedly tortured in jail. Another work entitled "Itihasko yas ghadima" consists of thirty-one poems. Some of these deal with Thawang in Rolpa affected by insurgency, poverty of Nepalese who are forced to work in foreign countries and about the war in Palestine. Some of the poems portray Nepalese society between the years 1982 and 1998. In his work of poetry entitled "*Bandi ra Chandragiri*" is a poetic dialogue between the prisoner and Chandragiri hills surrounding the southern part of Kathmandu valley.

Another well- known writer symphathetic to the Maoist cause is Dr. Rishiraj Baral born in 1952 in Sindhuli in the hills of eastern Nepal. He did his doctorate in Nepali and was teaching Nepali at the university.[69] He is known primarily for his short stories although he has written novels and literary criticism. Among his published collection of short stories include "*Sainya Upahar*". He has written in the introduction of this book about a movement against exploitation and injustice started by the Nepalese people from Sisne and Jaljala (places in Rukum and Rolpa where the insurgency started). As literature should also reflect this movement he says the stories in the collection are representative of this trend[70].

Among the leadership of the Maoists, C.P. Gajurel has written few short stories. Mohan Baidya "Chaitanya" (or Kiran) is supposed to be one of ideologues of the Maoists and is a student of Nepali language. Other writers include Ganga Shrestha, Mani Thapa, Shakti Lamsal, Anil Shrestha, Ishwar Chandra Gyawali, Bhawani Pandey (Bhashkar) and Ghanashyam Dhakal. Nepali writer and critic Khagendra Sangraula believes such writers as Rishiraj Baral and Ichuk rise above the average Maoist writing and possess dynamism found in any good literature. On the other hand, he has found that Maoist writers "share Maoist cadre's intolerance of other dimensions of life". Govinda Bartaman, literary editor of "Mulyankan", a monthly found that the Maoist writers are "didactic and not artistically rich" and found they don't have a potential for producing great literature. Nepalese writer Narayan Dhakal felt that the Maoist writers could not compete with such Indian Naxalite inclined writers as Kanchan Kumar or Wara Wara Rao. He found them to be "glorifying violence loudly and discriminately and keep celebrating their martyrs."[71]

Purnabiram is the *nom de plume* of Balaram Sharma

Bhattarai from Kathmandu. He was born in 1953. He has written "Literature is always writing about the weak and the suffering person. Nepal is now looking for change and I trust such change would take place by means of literature." [72] He has written poetry and short stories. These include "Aphanta", collection of short stories, *"Panimathi Pani"*, collection of short stories and a collection of poems entitled *"Itihas ka killaharuma"*.

According to poet Yuyutsu R.D.Sharma, "Maoist writing remains a novel and untouched area for researchers, creative writers and scholars interested in knowing the fate of contemporary Nepal's turbulence any attempt to brush it aside would mean ignoring crucial dimension of contemporary Nepalese literature and society".[73]

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CHAPTER FIVE

The Triangle

Monarchy, the Maoists and the Masses

In the first general elections held in 1991 after restoration of multiparty system in Nepal, United People's Front or *Samyukta Jana Morcha* a radical communist party contested the elections under the new Constitution that recognized constitutional monarchy and won nine seats out of 205 in the House of Representatives, making it the third largest party. This indicated that the party and many of its leaders who formed the Maoist party had accepted consitutional monarchy. Babu Ram Bhattarai, the Maoist leader was the chairman of the party. Another communist party, CPN (UML) won 69 seats, making it the second largest party, next only to Nepali Congress that formed the government. The party in its earlier incarnations had asked for overthrow of the monarchy.

The 40- point demand presented by the Maoists in 1996 did not ask Nepal to be declared a republic. It only asked "all the special rights and privileges of the King and his family should be ended. There was also a demand for putting "army, police and administration" under people's control. Actually, police and administration were under the control of elected government and parliament under the constitution promulgated in 1990. However, the question whether the RNA (Royal Nepal Army) was also under such control or was it directly under the monarch was not quite clear at that time.

Another demand was for Nepal to be declared a secular state. Since the monarch was follower of Hindu religion as required by convention and 1990 Constitution, it was not clear whether a Hindu king could reign the country after it became "secular".

King Birendra was reigning in Nepal when the insurgency started. Unlike in the first eighteen years of his reign, he had become a "constitutional monarch" since 1990. He had been reluctant to see force being used in the initial phases of insurgency, as it would mean killing Nepalese people by the Royal Nepalese Army. It was only with his consent that RNA could be used against the insurgents. As the insurgency was growing it is possible that he would have consented to use of Army earlier. However, everything was to change drastically on June 1,2001 when his entire family was massacred.

Writing in the vernacular daily[1], a month after the royal massacre in which King Birendra, his queen and seven other members of the royal family were allegedly assassinated by the Crown Prince Dipendra, Babu Ram Bhattarai declared that Nepal had already become a republic. He asked that new "Kot Massacre" should not be recognized. It was after massacre of a large number of nobles at Kot near the old Royal Palace in 1846 that led to the Rana oligarchy assuming power that was to last more than a century. On the other hand, he said that King Birendra's family was massacred because he had stood guard against Indian expansionism and safeguarded the independence and integrity of the country. Bhattarai had claimed earlier that King Birendra had hesitated to use the Royal Nepal Army against the Maoists that was not liked by "imperialists and expansionists". According to him, there were similarities of views between King Birendra and the Maoists and there existed an "undeclared functional unity". As the "American imperialists" and "Indian expansionists" were getting closer, King Birendra was close to the Chinese as the Maoists had been. (Bhattarai, Baburam, "*Naya Kotparba lai maanyata dinu hundaina*") The New Kot Massacre should not be recognized.[2] However, Prachanda claimed that Maoists had met Dhirendra Shah, the youngest brother of the King who had renounced his title to get married to a British girl and plans were being made for a meeting between King Birendra and the Maoists few months before he was assassinated. He praised the late King for his stands against Indian hegemony from time to time. Prachanda said his entire family would not have been massacred had he been willing to use RNA against the people.[3] In an interview given from his remote hideout in midwestern hills of Nepal Prachanda said that traditional monarchy in Nepal had ended from all points of view, physically, legally and morally. He also called King Gyanendra to be the "villain" in the Royal Massacre.[4] Baburam Bhattarai suggested that the Maoists were going to propose King Birendra to be the first President of Republic of Nepal.[5]

The Maoists had realized that King Birendra's popularity had increased considerably after 1990, as he had become a "constitutional monarch". However, they thought they would get popular support for their demand for a republic after the royal massacre as they thought the popularity of the monarchy had gone down as a result of the massacre. They were miscalculating in this respect.

When the Maoists and the Government decided to have a second round of talks in 2003, there was no elected government in the country. King Gyanendra appointed Lokendra Bahadur Chand as Prime Minister. The Maoist leader Baburam Bhattarai said he was dealing with the King because he controlled the armed forces.[6]

Maoist leader Baburam Bhattarai had issued several statements in the past personally attacking King Gyanendra and his son Crown Prince Paras. He has blamed them for being involved in Royal Massacre in 2001[7] The Maoists have shown flexibility in their earlier stand about monarchy. Maoist leader Krishna Bahadur Mahra said the Maoists would respect the decision of the people if they wished to retain kingship.[8] The Maoists suggested that King Gyanendra could play a role similar to that of Prince Narodom Sinhanuk in Cambodia. *The Times of India*, an influential newspaper published from New Delhi said that there is a traidtion of monarchs voluntarily abdicating the throne in the larger interests of the people and "King Gyanendra could take the high road to end the civil war" meaning abdication.[9] As some people believe this paper sometimes reflects the views of the South Block, such a suggestion was indeed surprising. Less than two months after such a suggestion was published, Maoist leader Baburam Bhattarai suggested in a speech he delivered in Gorkha in June 2003 that King Gyanendra should abdicate in order to resolve Maoist insurgency. The Maoists were reported to be ready to give him the post of President and Prime Minister in the Republic. He said that his request for the King to abdicate and give up the control over the army was not accepted.[10]

Maoist leader Badal claimed that a proposal was sent from the palace to form a Maoist government in the country if they were to surrender their arms. However, he said the Maoists would not accept such a proposal.[11] Badal said in an interview given to a leftist magazine[12] that the main issue in the dialogue with the Government was the control of the armed forces in the country. He said that the Palace controlled the Royal Nepal Army. However, he doubted if the Palace really exercised control over it.. According to him the government has no power to persuade the RNA to follow its instructions. He claimed that the Government was unable to implement what had been agreed in the talks such as securing release of detainees or to sending soldiers to barracks. According to him, the RNA was never under elected representatives of the people anytime in the history and following orders of neither the King nor the Government.

Some leaders of the mainstream political parties such as Nepali Congress and UML started to make anti-monarchial statements after Prime Minster Deuba was dismissed in October 2002. Former Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala has said "the root cause of instability lies in the Palace" and if Nepal becomes a republic, it will be because of King Gyandendra".[13] Five political parties that had occupied 90 percent of seats in dissolved Parliament started a signature campaign to make property of King Gyanendra and late King Birendra public.[14] An eighteen-point proposal adopted by five agitaing political parties intended to trim the powers of the monarch drastically. These parties were Nepali Congress, CPN (UML), Nepal Workers and Peasant's Party, United People's Front and one faction of Sadbhavana Party. It proposed to end discretionary powers of the King, to devise a system to make the Crown Property public on a regular basis, to limit the title of Royal Family only to the King, the Queen and the Crown Prince and to change the national anthem that glorified the monarch. In addition, it also wanted to ensure that the State would not provide special protection to any one religion.[15] This was perhaps intended as a first step in changing Nepal from a Hindu to a secular state.

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CHAPTER SIX

The Neighbours, the Superpower and Insurgents in other Countries

(I) INDIA

> "The Maoist insurgency is a threat not only to the security of Nepal but also to the security of India"
>
> —Shyam Saran, Indian Ambassador to Nepal

As a country sharing a long border with Nepal, India is definitely interested in the insurgency, its geopolitical and strategic significance for the region and for India's security itself. India is facing the problem of armed insurgencies in several of its states. The most important of these are in the northeast, People's War Group (PWG) in Andhra Pradesh and in Jharkhand.

The insurgency- affected area of Nepal, especially in Kanchanpur, Kailali and Bardia is indeed very close to Delhi geographically. As the insurgency has now spread in many parts of the country in areas bordering India there is always the possibility of a "spillover" inside Indian Territory. As the Maoists in Nepal are now collaborating with such separatist movements as "Khumbuwan Liberation Front" in the far eastern hills of Nepal, there is the possibility of involvement of separatist movements in the northeast with that of Maoists that will endanger Indian security, especially in the sensitive "Chicken's neck" area near Siliguri in India where a narrow strip of Indian territory links northeast with rest of India. This area is immediately south of the area where Khumbuwan separatist movement has its area of influence.

Several Nepali leaders including former Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala have complained in the past that the Maoist leaders were receiving sanctuary in India[1]. There does seem to be a nexus between such insurgent groups as People's War Group in India and the Maoists. Leader of Opposition in the Nepalese Parliament, Madhav Kumar Nepal is on record having expressed concerns about a link between India and the Maoists.[2]

The Indian Government has taken a stand that the Maoists are terrorists. The Indian Ambassador to Nepal, Shyam Sharan has said there was a link between the Maoists and insurgent groups in India.[3] A raid conducted by the Indian authorities in Patna on February both PWG members and the Nepalese Maoists were arrested along with electronic detonators.[4] A Joint communiqué issued after the visit of Prime Minister Deuba to India on March 2002 states "the Indian side condemned the widespread attacks by the Maoists in Nepal and reiterated its support for the steps taken by the government of Nepal to maintain peace and security in the country. It also affirms "the commitment of the two countries not to allow their respective territories to be used for activities inimical to the interest of the other". It also agrees to prevent misuse of open border by terrorists. During his visit to India in June 2002, Prime Minister Vajpayee is reported to have said that India would help Nepal in fighting against the Maoists.[5] There have been reports that some of the insurgents during attacks in Achham and Rolpa could have been foreigners as they looked darker in colour and spoke an unintelligible language. An Indian news magazine speculated that there are links between Nepal's Maoists and pan-Islamic jehadi elements. Some of the dead according to this were jehadi fighters from Bangladesh.[6] According to *The Indian Express*[7], Indian Home Minister Advani is said to have handed over intelligence reports to the American Government during his visit to the US that suggested Pakistan's funding of Maoists in Nepal. On the other hand, Pakistani President Musharraf told a group of Nepalese journalists visiting Islamabad about cross border terrorism in Nepal. "India has been encouraging in Nepal with all the problems that you are having with the Maoists? Unfortunately, they have safe havens in India. Why don't they shut down borders?"[8]

It was reported that a shipment of arms including 180 kg of explosives and 93,192 bullets allegedly being sent to the Maoists in Nepal was seized by Bangladesh security agency. Among those arrested included activists of *Jamaat-e-Islami* of Bangladesh and other political parties.[9]

The initial 40-Point demands made by the Maoists in 1996 included several aspects of Indo-Nepal relations. It called for regulating the Indo-Nepal border, setting up work permit system for foreigners (most of whom are Indians), stopping "cultural pollution" of Hindi videos and banning of vulgar Hindi films and video cinema. It also advocated closing Gurkha recruiting centers in the country.[10] Maoists had retained demands about regulating Indo-Nepal border, work permit system and closing Gurkha recruitment centers while proposing agenda of dialogue with the government in April 2003.[11]

Arms for the Royal Nepal Army

Nepal needs modern weapons to fight the Maoist insurgency after declaration of the state of emergency in November 2001. The Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship signed in 1950 states "The Government of Nepal shall be free to import, from or through the territory of India, arms ammunition or warlike material and equipment necessary for the security of Nepal". However, it states that the procedure required for this purpose would be agreed later. When asked if there would be any problems from the Indian side if Nepal were to receive arms from the US, an Indian Foreign Ministry official is reported to have said " We are cognizant of Nepal's security needs and we are prepared to help Nepal in whatever way possible".[12]

Khum Bahadur Khadka, Nepalese Home Minister, had asked India and the US for night vision helicopter, military training and other weapons after declaration of Emergency.[13] India donated two helicopters for use against the insurgents, previously used by the Indian Army and built in India which arrived in Kathmandu in December.[14] Unconfirmed reports stated large quantities of arms supplied by India to Royal Nepal Army entered the country for use against the Maoists.[15]

According to news report published in *The Hindu*[16], US Assessment Team from Hawaii based Pacific Command visited the country to consider demand for transport equipment but would not post military advisors on Nepali soil. It said India and the US were consulting each other in increasing Nepal's capacity to combat terrorists but their co-operation had not reached the level of co-ordination. It reported that a large consignment of transport helicopters from Ukraine was received by Nepal.

A night vision helicopter used by the Nepalese Army repelled attacks by Maoists in Narayan Bazar in Dailekh in the hills of mid western Nepal.[17]

Colin Powell visited Nepal in January 2002, the first ever visit by an American Secretary of State to Nepal indicating the importance attached by the US to Nepal. He had supported strong military action against the Maoists. The US was reported to be ready to provide military hardware to Nepal after "assessing the need" according to Acting Foreign Secretary of Nepal who returned from a trip to the United States.[18] It is expected that American assistance will be "non-lethal" in nature.

According to news report published in a local Nepali daily,[19], India is reported to have sent a team recently to study Maoist insurgency affected region and prepared a list of area of co-operation.

An Indian woman was arrested in April 2002 in the Indian part of Kashmir was carrying $100,000 to be delivered to a top separatist leader there. She was bringing the money from Kathmandu.[20] This could illustrate how Nepal's territory is being used for anti-Indian activities. The Indian Government is reported to be preparing to take action against the Maoists in four states bordering Nepal – UP, Bihar, Uttaranchal and

West Bengal.[21]

India's Chief of Army Staff, General Vij visited Kathmandu in April 2003 and announced that India will provide an additional one billion rupees of military assistance including military hardware, training, logistic and technical support.

Maoist leader Badal asked the two neighbouring countries of Nepal, India and China to help in order to make the Government-Maoist talks a success. Such appeal came just before the visit of Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee to China in June 2003. This was the first such appeal made by the Maoists to external powers. He blamed the United States for trying to disrupt the peace process. He claimed that the US was emerging as a "common enemy" of India, China and Nepal. He said Maoists believed that China and India would emerge in the future as rivals of the Americans.[22]

In a nutshell, it could be said that the Indian Government has not taken the Maoist insurgency in Nepal as seriously as it should have. A former Indian Ambassador to Nepal K.V.Rajan, who was accrediated to Nepal during the period when the insurgency was growing, has stated that India should also accept its share of responsibility, as it was a passive spectator for too long. He wrote t here was no excuse for not taking action across the open border when the Maoist leaders were roaming freely across the open Indo-Nepal border and holding meetings with senior Nepalese politicians.[23] The enormous stakes involved for India if the Maoists were to take over Nepal have been under-estimated.

There was a time lag of almost nine months when there was no Indian Ambassador in Nepal in a crucial time in 2001/2002 when the insurgency was gathering strength.

(II) CHINA

> "Chinese Government opposes terrorism in any form upholds international co-operation to combat terrorism. In this context, we condemn the violence and terrorist acts unleashed by the anti-government outfits in Nepal"
>
> - Wu Congwong,
> Chinese Ambassador to Nepal
> 10/5/2002 (quoted in *The Kathmandu Post*)

The Maoist insurgency in Nepal is named after Chairman Mao of the People's Republic of China. However, the Chinese Government has branded them as terrorists and accused them of "misusing" the name of the late Chairman Mao tse tung. China does not like to call them Maoists but has been calling them "anti-government forces". The Chinese Ambassador in Nepal has denied any links between the Maoists and the Government or any organization in China, including the Communist Party[24]. The Chinese Foreign Minister is reported to have expressed similar sentiments when he called Prime Minister Deuba to support "all the measures including the state of Emergency initiated by the Government to maintain peace and stability in the country". Acting Foreign Secretary of Nepal visited Beijing in April and found solidarity and co-operation in fighting the Maoists. When the Chinese Prime Minister Zhu Rongji visited Nepal in May 2001, he is supposed to have said that Maoist insurgency had nothing to do with present day China.[25] It appears that there is a realization in China that the excesses committed during the days of the Cultural Revolution initiated by Chairman Mao a mistake.

The construction of railway linking eastern China with Lhasa is expected to be completed by the year 2004. It appears that China is interested in its own stability and would like to see a stable, independent Nepal and would be very much opposed to turmoil brought by the Maoist insurgency. It appears that the Maoist leaders in Nepal have not understood this. It is interesting to remember in this context that none of the Maoist leaders in Nepal has received sanctuary in China. Sino-Nepal border is not an "open" one unlike the Indo-Nepal border. Actually, the insurgency has affected work on the construction of second highway linking Kathmandu with the Chinese border in Rasuwa for which agreement was signed during the Chinese Premier's visit in 2001. It is difficult to undertake detailed surveying in the terrain due to lack of security.

The Maoist leaders on the other hand, have complementary things to say about Chairman Mao and present day China in their statements and articles. The statement reportedly made by Prachanda offering one month ceasefire[26] expresses concern about "encirclement" of China about the possibility of establishment of American military base in Nepal similar to those in Central Asia and Afghanistan.

The talk given by Professor Wong Hong Yu at Chinese Study Center on May 7th could give some insight into Chinese thinking on Sino-Nepalese ties and the Maoists. This is in spite of the fact that Professor Wong does not hold any official position. He says, "We support Nepalese Government's measures adopted that maintain stability and combat against the activities of violence and terror". He adds "Any departure from Nepalese traditional policies of neutralism and non-alignment will do harm to the legitimate Nepalese national interests". Nepal needs to import arms and equipments besides helicopters to fight the insurgency. These would come from the United States, Britain or India. It appears that the Chinese would not object to this. What might seem objectionable would be stationing of foreign troops or joint operations with a foreign army in Nepal or use of Nepalese territory against Chinese interests in Tibet. It's interesting to note that China is reported to have said that it was ready to assist Nepal in solving the Maoist problems. It is not clear in what form such assistance could be. China also participated in a Conference hosted by Britain in London in June 19-20,2002 which discussed the Maoist insurgency among other things.

The Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Nepal while addressing a meeting at Kathmandu on May 2003 did not call Maoists as terrorists. He said "China has kept a close eye on development of Nepal's domestic situation" and believes peace talk to be "internal matter of Nepal". China has indeed followed the policy of strict non-interference in internal affairs of Nepal. The fact that it has not given shelter to the insurgents neither in its capital or bordering towns cannot be dependent solely on geography of inhospitable terrain along the Himalayas or the Tibetan

Plateau and the fact that its border with Nepal is not an "open" one. It has re-iterated its belief in the ability of Nepalese people to solve the problems facing it. What is important in this context is a warning in a diplomatic language that any delay in durable peace may affect Nepal's independence and sovereignity. Perhaps it could imply is that such a delay might lead to foreign interference in Nepal. The Maoist leader Baburam Bhattarai stated in March this year that he had decided to participate in peace talks due to "international pressure". Many of the Maoist leaders were living in India during the initial period of insurgency. The Indian Ambassador to Nepal in a recent interview admitted that the Maoists in Nepal have links with different insurgent groups in India. Nevertheless, it was difficult to monitor their activities in view of open Indo-Nepal border. What could have happened is that the Americans may have "pressured" India in persuading the Maoist leaders to leave Indian Territory.

The Chinese have not "reciprocated" the Maoist's goodwill towards China and their concern about its "encirclement" in which Nepal could be used. In fact, the Chinese are too pre-occupied with their own affairs and are not interested in interfering in the internal affairs of a friendly country like Nepal. Things are not the same as in 1961 when the Chinese had warned against any interference in Nepal's security, a move which made the construction of a road linking Kathmandu with the Chinese border and increasing assertion of Nepal's position as an independent entity possible.

The recent announcement after India's Chief of Army

Staff that one billion rupees of military assistance will be provided by India if Nepal needed to suppress the Maoist insurgency and the American commitment for anti-terrorism assistance could be factors which might have influenced the address by the Chinese Ambassador.

Tibetan refugees in considerable numbers have entered Nepal in the past four decades. Some have settled in Nepal. Others have passed through Nepal to enter India and many have migrated to Western countries. However, 18 Tibetan asylum seekers were arrested by the Nepalese Government in May 2003 and handed over to the Chinese. The United States and UNHCR in Geneva protested against this action.[27]

China has excellent relations with Pakistan. President Musharraf attended SAARC Summit in Kathmandu in the beginning of this year overflying through China and bypassing the Indian Territory entirely. However, China seems to be concerned by increasing separatist activities in the province of Sinkiang where the majority of population consists of Uigurs who are Muslims. An article published in the prestigious [28] Le *Monde Diplomatique* states that the Taliban in Afghanistan "exported " two things to China, especially Sinkiang: religious fundamentalism and cheap heroine through Wakhan corridor where Afghanistan shares the border with China". According to the article, the Uigur Separatists were termed as "Separatist Terrorists" by China. Sinkiang is rich in natural resources especially natural gas, petroleum and coal and contains Lob Nor, the site of nuclear testing by China. Pakistan's capital Islamabad is connected by "Silk Road" to Khunjareb where the two countries share a common border. The alignment of the road passes mostly along the Indus River. Urumqui in Sinkiang is already connected by railway from the eastern part of China. China has stated that it is opposed to terrorism in all forms. It also supported American action against the Taliban in Afghanistan in late 2001. Taliban grew in the Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan and was supported by it. Pakistan was one of three countries to recognize the Taliban regime in Afghanstan. It is ironic that Taliban's attempted "export" of fundamentalism in Sinkiang might have been the major reason, which might have affected relations between China and Pakistan. In a nutshell, it could be said that Chinese national interests, the desire to promote stability in Nepal and opposition to terrorism guide Chinese policy regarding Maoist insurgency in Nepal.

(III) THE UNITED STATES

> "From a humanitarian standpoint alone, the US does not wish to see these insurgents prevail. But the Maoists threaten US interests for other reasons as well. The leadership has made clear that it seeks to replace the constitutional monarchy with an absolutist communist regime-one that would be overtly hostile to the United States. Recent Maoist statements defending the Khmer Rouge give one indication of the of instability and humanitarian catastrophe that might follow a takeover. Such a development could destabilize the wider region, and Nepal could quite easily turn into a failed state, a potential haven for terrorists like that which we have transformed in Afghanistan."
>
> —Donald Camp,
> US Deputy Under Secretary of State
> (People's Review, 6 March 2003)

The end of Cold War and the emergence of the United States as the only superpower in the early nineties caused some adjustments in relations between states in South Asia. The Soviet Union, which was an ally of India, disintegrated. Although Russia remained a friend of India, it was no longer the superpower having the same military might and influence in the Cold War. By the mid-nineties, a new regime of Taliban was to capture power in Afghanistan. It consisted largely of Islamic fundamentalist groups, which were trained in Pakistan. The geo-political and strategic situation for India was becoming adverse. There were increasing cross border raids in Muslim majority Kashmir valley, and Pakistan, believed it should have annexted it. Some of those involved were veterans of anti Soviet- war in Afghanistan who wanted to liberate another Islamic land from the infidels. India continued to have an unresolved boundary problem with China, a nuclear power by that time. A feeling of insecurity could have been contributing factors that led to detonation of nuclear device in Rajasthan desert by India in 1998. Soon, Pakistan was to explode its own nuclear bomb. Pakistan, an ally of the United States since the Cold War and a "front line" state for struggle against the Soviets in Afghanistan in the eighties felt its "strategic depth" had increased as a friendly regime was installed in Kabul. An Indian Airlines aircraft flying from Kathmandu to Delhi was hijacked and ended up landing in Taliban ruled Kandahar, allies of the Pakistanis. The Indian Government released three prisoners in exchange of aircraft's passengers. These were Masood Azhar, Sheikh Omar and Mushtaq Zargar. The fact that the hijackers had boarded the plane in Kathmandu suggesting the presence of Kashmiri militants, Islamic fundamentalists and possibly Al

Quaida in Kathmandu, was the first major episode in the triangular relationship between Nepal, India and the United States in the twenty first century. Masood Azhar is supposed to have declared *jehad* against India and America after his release in exchange with hostages.[29] He was the principal accused in bombing of Indian Parliament in December 2001. Sheikh Omar is charged in the murder of American journalist working for The Wall Street Journal. A story published in Indian news magazine[30] calls Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) based in London an umbrella organization of Maoists and narcoterrorists the world over whose membership includes Nepal's Maoists. However, no evidence has so far been presented to link the Maoists in Nepal with narcotics trade.

A series of dramatic changes in alignments were to be seen as a result of terrorist attack in New York and Washington on 9/11/2002. This was alleged to be work of Al Quaida under the leadership of Saudi born Osama bin Laden. The US joined the war against terrorism. Pakistan was to become a "front line state" again as it decided to side with the anti-terrorist coalition led by the US. The United States declared war on terrorism. A few months later Taliban was finally defeated and a new Government was installed in Kabul.

The United States and India were getting closer after 9/11. Although sanctions were imposed on both India and Pakistan after nuclear tests in 1998, commonalities of interests had already brought India and the US closer even during the presidency of Clinton. Both being the largest democracies in the world, progress of information technology in India, increasing clout of persons of Indian descent residing in the US played important parts in bringing the two countries closer, it was primarily the changed strategic equations emerging after the end of the Cold War and above all, the common threat of terrorism after September 11th which was the most important factor. According to news report published in *India Today*[31], Indian intelligence agencies said about repeated "inputs" on plans to hijack an aircraft from Kathmandu's Tribhuwan International Airport and crash it into a prominent symbol of Indian democracy or power.

It thus appears probable that assistance from both the US and India would be made available to Nepalese Army in its flight against the Maoist insurgency. As both the India and the US are fighting terrorism and have come closer especially after 9/11, there are ample grounds for such an outcome. On the other hand, the nature of arms to be delivered and their transit through Indian Territory would be a matter of concern to the Indians. China and the US found themselves on the same side during the fight against terrorism, especially in Afghanistan. This was partly due to separatist movement and insurgency in the Chinese province of Sinkiang having a Muslim majority. However, American policy to "contain" China may re-emerge after the end of anti-Al Qaida operation in Afghanistan. Whether Nepal will also be involved and how would its two neighbours react in such a scenario would depend upon the outcome of military action against the Maoists. India may not be too happy if sophisticated arms are provided to Nepal by the Americans to fight insurgency, especially if it finds what it calls ISI activities along in Nepal and along Indo-Nepal border continues to be a problem for its security. In the worst case scenario, if communal violence is not controlled in Gujrat and spreads to other states, especially western UP it could create serious problems for the Indian Government. Of all the districts in the Terai, the insurgency it is most pronounced in four districts in Nepal-Kanchanpur, Kailali, Bardia and Banke, between Mahakali in the west to Babai in the east. This corresponds to areas extending north of Baharaich up to Banbasa in UP. The Indian Territory linking the Far Western Terai districts with the Indian capital, Delhi is very important strategically. It is very close to Delhi geographically, closer than the insurgency affected areas in the northeast, Jharkhand or Andhra Pradesh. It also has a large population of Muslims - almost a third of the total, consisting of such districts of Rohilkhand as Moradabad, Bareilly and Rampur.

The American Deputy Assistant Secretary of State is on record having said that the US does not wish to see the insurgents prevail. "The Maoist insurgents in Nepal have destroyed schools, tortured and killed civilians, bombed buildings, looted food from humanitarian aid projects, devastated infrastructure and forcibly conscripted children. An estimated 40 percent of rural government infrastructure has been destroyed...from a humanitarian standpoint alone, the US does not wish to see these insurgents prevail". He added the absolutist communist regime would be overtly hostile to the US and the "Maoist statements defending the Khmer Rouge would give one indication of the kind of instability and humanitarian catastrophe that might follow a takeover. He talked about destabilization of the whole region and the possibility of Nepal becoming a failed state and a terrorist haven in view of the Maoist's links with similar organizations in South Asia.[32]

The Maoist leaders have accused the US of trying to sabotage the talks with the Government. Chairman of the Maoist Party, Prachanda accused the US of trying to disrupt the talks[33]. Matrika Yadav said the Government was working in collusion with the American imperialism[34] *Maoist* leader Dev Gurung has said the US might be viewing Nepal in a similar way after having attacked Afghanistan and might send troops[35]. Baburam Bhattarai has said the US wants to set up a military base in Nepal in view of its strategic interests in South Asia[36].

The American Ambassador Michael Malinowsky has said that the US has put the Maoists in watch list of secondary type of terrorist organizations and could withdraw their name depending upon their performance in the future. Three top Maoist leaders reportedly met the First Secretary of the American Embassy in Kathmandu in early May 2003 in which the Americans expressed concern about violence against the American citizens in Nepal. It is said the threat of American intervention was one of the key factors that persuaded the Maoist leaders to agree to participate in talks with the Government.[37] The United States signed an agreement with Nepal for such anti-terrorism assistance including "advanced and investigative security and counter-terrorism technique" after the visit of Indian Army Chief in April 2003 when India promised to provide Rs one billion worth of anti-terrorism assistance. The US has provided training to over 200 Nepali officials under Anti-terrorism Assistance Program. One Nepali columnist concluded that Delhi would not let the US have any military base in India. "Neither will it allow the US to set up a sort of military base in Nepal."[38]

Wendy Chamberlain, USAID's Assistant Administrator for Asia and the Near East said that the US supported the peace talks and that there was no military solution to the Maoist problem. On the other hand, she also pointed out the strong American position about terrorism.[39] The Maoist leader Baburam Bhattarai, in a letter sent to the Government in July 2003 said Royal Nepalese Army was becoming "Royal American Army". Director of USIS in Kathmandu, Constance Colding Jones replied that the allegation was baseless. She said the United States could change its policy of calling the Maoists as terrorists if they were to give up kidnapping and extortion and join the national mainstream.[40]

The Maoists gave a deadline for resuming talks with the Government till the end of July 2003. One of the conditions for this was that the Government should annul the Memorandum of Understanding on "terrorism" signed with the US and expulsion of all American security advisors in Nepal. Government said there were no American security advisors permanently based in Nepal.[41]

IV) INSURGENTS IN OTHER COUNTRIES

The Shining Path, ***Peru***

Khmer Rouge, ***Cambodia***

Naxalites, ***India***

Shining Path, Peru

Although Nepal and Peru are far apart geographically, the Maoist insurgency in Nepal is in many respects similar to the Shining Path (*Sendero Luminoso)* insurgency in Peru. It erupted in 1980 and continued for twelve years. The most remarkable similarity between the two insurgencies is that the breeding grounds of both contained many commonalities.

Nepal being a low income and one of the least developed countries, several studies were made in the later half of twentieth century about its poverty and prospects of growth. A group of professors from East Anglia University in Britain were in Nepal in mid-1970's to study the impact of construction of roads and produced a book called "Nepal in Crisis" (Blaikie, Cameron and Seddon, Nepal in Crisis, Adroit Publishers, Delhi, 1979) that presented a bleak picture of Nepal. However, no local or foreigner studying Nepal forecasted that a Maoist uprising similar to the one in Peru could also take place in Nepal till 1992 two years after restoration of multi-party democracy in Nepal.[42]

The population of Peru is almost he same as that of Nepal although its per capita income is ten times higher. Peru has the Andes, similar to the Himalayas in Nepal. The Sierras are similar to Nepal's Mahabharat Range and the Amazon Basin like the Terai. Peru is also a multi-ethnic and multilingual country like Nepal. About a quarter of the population is made up of descendants of the Spaniards who settled here in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. More than a third is made of *mesitzos* or those of mixed Spanish and Red

Indian population. Almost 45 percent is made up of Red Indians who still speak such languages as Quechua. Spanish is distantly related to another Indo-European language Nepali that spread all over Nepal since fifteenth century and became a link language like Spanish brought by the *conquistadors* in Peru in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. If there is a movement for assertion of identity by tribal groups in Nepal, similar movement was also found in Peru when local tribes felt they had been left out of process of development and was far behind *mestizos* and descendents of white Spaniards.

Shining Path in Peru was led by Abimael Guzman who was a revolutionary academic teaching at the University of Ayachucho in the Sierra region of Peru. There are many similarities between the *Sierra* region of Peru and hilly areas of Nepal, especially in Mid-western and far western regions. There is widespread poverty and a number of tribal people, such as Kham Magars especially in Rolpa in Nepal on one hand and the indegenious Red Indians in Peru. And like his Comrade in Nepal, Babu Ram Bhattarai, Guzman came from a middle-class background was a top student and also a PhD. Guzman's doctoral dissertation was on the status of the indigeneous Andean people in a state dominated by whites and mixed parentage *Mestizos.*The followers of Shining Path were mainly indigeneous people, although their leaders like Guzman tended to be white or *mestizo*. Similarly, in Nepal such leaders as Baburam Bhattarai and Prachanda were high caste Brahmins, the followers included a large number of tribals and *Dalits.* Many Maoist leaders in Nepal have followed the practice of *Shining Path* leaders in having a *nom de guerre*. If Abimael Guzman was known as Comrade Gonzalo, Nepal's Pushpa Kamal Dahal is known as Comrade Prachanda, Ram Bahadur Thapa as Badal and Nanda Kishor Pun as Pasang.

Within three short years Comrade Gonzalo had chased off a demoralized Peruvian police from his stronghold around Ayachucho. The main source of finance of *Shining Path* was bank robberies and "war tax" from businesses and individuals. They followed an recruited aggressively among the peasants of Red Indian and mestizos had adequate number of recruits. The Army was called in and President Fujimori declared a state of emergency in 1991. The insurgency raged on till 1992 when Guzman was captured and was caged like a lion for the benefit of the media. He was later, sentenced to prison for life. In the 12 years that it dragged on, 25,000 Peruvians were killed, and the country lost half its GDP. In his book entitled *The Shining Path of* Peru states that the government in Lima did not take the Senderitas seriously in the beginning. When the Army did get involved, it was to take brutal and repressive measures in rural areas in which the Andean peasants were caught in the crossfire. This strengthened the local support for the Senderitas who were suffering from joblessness, inflation, lack of government and corruption.

Palmer says that the other factors that led the Shining Path revolution was that the indigenous Andean peasants were not integrated into Peru's social and economic mainstream and they felt left out. In the beginning the *Senderistas* took action against corrupt officials and won populist backing, in urban areas they identified key opposition figures and intimidated or killed them. They tried to neutralize grassroots leaders from the moderate left. Towards the end, there was a personality cult surrounding Comrade Gonzalo who launched purges against suspected spies. After 12 years of war, according to Palmer the peasants were fed up and felt that the Government could take better care of their needs.[43]

Dr. Scott Palmer visited Nepal in May 2002 and addressed a meeting of Nepal Council of World Affairs about similarities between the Maoists in Nepal and the *Shining Path* in Peru. There were "People's Courts" in Peru and the involvement of women was significant although it was not necessary to get a Shining Path "visa" to visit areas controlled by them. There was never a "dialogue" between the Government and the insurgents as in the case of Nepal as the *sendero luminoso* questioned the legitimacy of the Peruvian Government. One crucial difference was that the Maoists in Nepal had been part of political process as they were the third largest party in Parliament after elections in 1991. This was not the case in Peru. Suggesting a solution to the problem on the basis of his experiences in Peru he said "The way out of the crisis is beefing up the intelligence, shielding the communities even if that means death of the security personnel, forming teams led by local people, selective attacks backed up by firm action, among others"[44]

A study comparing the rise of insurgency in Peru and Nepal based on fieldwork both the countries have produced some interesting hypotheses.[45] Scott Palmer and TA Marks believe that the revolutionarie's own initiative could provide a better explanation for levels of political violence than such factors as level of poverty. In other words, "the principal actors themselves- insurgents and the government alike- are the most important significant causes of botht he initiation and expansion of the people's war in Peru between 1980 and the early 1990's and in Nepal since 1996." The People's War in Peru originated in the province of Ayachucho that was a backward region. It did not originate in other regions that were even more backward. Similarly, insurgency in Nepal originated at Rolpa and not in Achham further west, which was at the bottom of seventy-five districts of Nepal in terms of index of human development.

I have visited two countries in Latin America, Bolivia and Ecuador that border Peru. All of these three countries are in the Andes and contain many similarities with Nepal. A large part of the population of these countries is made up of Red Indians and *mestizos.* My trip to Bolivia was to attend a seminar on sustainable development organized by Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 2002. There were many Bolivian economists and civil servants participating in the seminar. Some of them could only speak Spanish. My working knowledge of Spanish helped me to ask some questions about Peru and Bolivia. It was in the highlands of Bolivia that the legendary insurgent, Che Gueverra was killed in the 1960s. I asked why was it that Shining Path had started in Peru and not in Ecuador or Bolivia that had many commonalities with that country. Actually, poverty and the percentage of Red Indians in the population were higher in Bolivia than in Peru. I was told that there was more decentralization in Bolivia than in Peru. The central Government provided twenty percent of its revenue to local Government. There was corruption in Bolivia but there was also more transparency than in Peru. These were some of the reasons why a movement similar to Shining Path in Peru had not grown in Bolivia.

Khmer Rouge, Cambodia

The American Ambassador to Nepal, Michael Malinowsky visited the site of Maoist attack in Mangalsen, Achham district in February 2002 in which 138 people, mostly security personnel were killed. He said the Maoists are same as Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, Shining Path in Peru or Al Quaida[46]. US Assistance Secretary of State Christina Rocca during her visit to Nepal found similarities in the tactics employed by the Maoists and Pol Pot regime in Cambodia[47] American Deputy Assistant Secretary of State has told a humanitarian catastrophe like the one in Cambodia might follow if the Maoists were to take over, in view of the recent Maoist statements defending the Khmer Rouge.[48] Among the points he made was forcible conscription of children, destruction of schools, torturing and killing of civilians, looting of food from humanitarian aid projects. On the other hand, Maoist leader Baburam Bhattarai when asked by an American newspaper about the possibility of Khmer Rouge type of rule in Nepal if the Maoists were to take over replied that there was no independent verification of events in Cambodia under Khmer Rouge which he thought were exaggerated. He said he was in favour of adapting Marxism-

Leninism to conditions suitable to Nepal and was in favour of "bourgeois democratic republic" instead of a "communist republic".[49]

Attack on the Sanskrit university in Dang and burning of the library could be described as some features similar to "cultural genocide" practiced by the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia.

Naxalite Insurgencies in India

Named after the village of Naxalbari is the Indian state of West Bengal situated just across the border from Nepal, this movement has spread in Indian states of Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhanad (formerly southern part of Bihar), Orissa and Chhattisgarh (formerly western part of Madhya Pradesh. It is known as PWG (People's War Group) in Andhra Pradesh, MCC (Maoist Communist Centre and CPI-ML (Marxist-Leninist) in Bihar and Jharkhand.

There are many similarities between Nepal's Maoists and the Naxalite groups in India. PWG in Andhra Pradesh is active mainly in Telangana region bordering Orissa. The Naxalite group has been active since the 1970's. Much of support for this movement comes from tribals and Dalits. The chief of PWG is a Dalit. Most of its cadres were educated but now have been replaced by semi-literate tribals, Dalits and backward classes. There has also been criminalization in the movement.[50] PWG has claimed the lives of 6,000 people in Andhra Pradesh in India.[51] After separation of Jharkhand from Bihar, fatalities from Naxalite activities have decreased. The new government formed after the new state was created declared compensation for surrender of arms, free education for children of Naxalites and bank loan for self-employment. On the other hand, police force was also modernized and given better weapons and communication facilities. However, Naxalite activity continues in many areas.[52]

International Dimensions

PWG is also an affiliate of RIM (Revolutionary International Movement), as CPI-N (Maoist) whose headquarters are in London.[53] . RIM is an organization of Maoists and narco-terrorists and is a part of drug cartel including those in South America. According to this article, Sikh separatists who assassinated Indira Gandhi and the Tamil Tiger (LTTE) that planned Rajib Gandhi's assassination were allies of RIM.[54] An organization of Maoist parties called CCOMPOSA (Co-ordination Committee of Maoist Parties and Organizations) was formed in 2001after a meeting in West Bengal, India which envisages to expand activities of Maoist groups in the region.[55]

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CHAPTER SEVEN

The Consequence

It is a reality that there are two regimes and two armies in the country

—Baburam Bhattarai,
(Kantipur 30/3/03)

Over the past years, several consequences of the Maoist insurgency in Nepal have become visible. These included setback to the parliamentary system of Government, decline in the earnings from tourism and adverse effect on the economy as a whole, accelerating migration from the villages to urban areas and across the border in search of security and employment.

(i) Emergency, Dissolution of Parliament and Sacking of Elected Prime Minister

The parliamentary system and Constitution adopted after Popular Movement in 1990 received a setback. A state of Emergency was imposed in November 2001 for six months with the approval of Parliament according to which some fundamental rights were suspended. Sher Bahadur Deuba elected Prime Minister by the largest party in Parliament asked the monarch to dissolve the Parliament in May 2002. He was envisaging to hold elections within six months as required by the Constitution. The elections as planned could not be held within six months as the security situation in the country had deteriorated. He asked the King to use Article 127 which empowers the Monarch to remove impediments in the working of the Constitution by postponing elections for one year. The King dismissed the elected Prime Minister for being "incompetent" saying he was taking over executive powers and appointed Lokendra Bahadur Chand as new Prime Minister. Although a cease-fire was announced in January 2003 and talks with the Maoists started in April, his government failed to get co-operation from the major political parties. He resigned in June 2003 and was replaced by Surya Bahadur Thapa as Prime Minister. Such steps as imposition of Emergency, dissolution of Parliament and sacking of elected Prime Minister were direct results of the Maoist insurgency in Nepal.

(ii) Decline in Living Standards and Migration

The per capita income in the country declined by almost 10 percent in the year 2001/02 because of economic slowdown in the country.[1]

According to a study made by a Centre for Economic and Social Development (CESOD), 2.5 million or almost ten percent of the population of the country was displaced from their homes and became internal refugees.[2] Those who could afford bought small plots of land in Kathmandu valley where real estate prices rose[3]. Many migrated across the international borders.

One of the areas most affected by the insurgency in the Terai was Rajapur region in Bardia district. There are 11 VDCs in the Western part of the district bordered by two effluents of River Karnali when it descends from the mountains to the Terai. The insurgents destroyed not only government facilities but also infrastructure such as telephone exchanges, transmission lines and rice mills. They even imposed curfew during night[4]. Any family having someone working in the Police or the Army was required either to resign from the job or leave the area. There were 300 families forced to leave their homes because of such requirements. The Army few weeks earlier and the Maoists decided to retaliate started a long special search operation.[5] A study of tribal Kham Magars from Rolpa in the area where the insurgency had its beginning concluded that the guerilla was accelerating migration from the hills to the valleys further to the south.[6] Many families in Likhu area of Ramechhap and Okhaldhunga districts started migrating because they had to pay "roof tax" imposed by the Maoists.[7] It was reported that one entire village in western part of Sindhuli district was depopulated of men who fled after the Maoists forced the locals to join them. There are now only old people, women and children left there.[8] There are reports that 90 percent of youth in villages away from the district headquarters in Far Western Region have migrated.[9] Hundreds of youth from Bandipur area and eastern part of Tanahu district are reported to have fled because of fear of being recruited by the Maoists.[10] The Maoists in Lamjung had followed the policy of conscripting one person between the ages of 12 to 40 from one family. Many youth visiting their villages during the festival of Dashain fled their homes without participating in the ceremony.[11] It was reported that Maoists were forcibly recruiting both boys and girls into their forces in Nuwakot district situated just west of Kathmandu and most of the villages do not have any youth left. It's adversely affecting agriculture as there are few men and women to work in the farms.[12] A reporter found that thousands of youth from hilly areas of Mid-western and Far Western region of the country were leaving Nepal for India in search of employment and security as they were afraid of getting in the crossfire between the Army and the Insurgents[13]. Similarly, force was being used by Maoists to recruit young men and women in village 30 km east of Birendranagar in Surkhet district in Mid Western region.[14] Two hundred residents in the same district are reported to have fled in one night when the Maoists demanded that each family must send one person for recruitment in their army.[15] Hundreds of residents of Rukum district are reported to have left the district either for the Terai or India. The Maoists destroyed several government offices in Rukum. Similarly, people in large numbers have also left Myanma, headquarters of Kalikot district.[16] Many people in Dang valley just south of insurgency affected hilly district migrated to India in order to escape forced recruitment by the Maoists. Some said they were also being used as "human shields" during Maoist attacks.[17] Several areas, mainly urban in Banke district reported a large increase in their population since the start of insurgency in 1996. Although the trend of increased migration from the hills to the Terai existed even before this period, it was accelerated due to insurgency. Many were migrating not only because of lack of employment opportunities in the hills but also deteriorating security situation, as they felt unsafe from both the Maoists and the Army. The workers of political parties such as Nepali Congress and UML were the first ones to leave their villages in the hills north of Dang valley. Those who could afford to buy a piece of land in the urban areas of Terai or Kathmandu are doing so. Many, especially the poorest of the poor also migrated across the border in India. One person who migrated from Rukum district said he left because the Maoists were asking for food and taking household goods by force.[18]

One article published on the reasons for such migration cites seizure of food by the Maoists, reluctance of government to permit certain types of food stuff to the conflict zone as these might be used by the insurgents are cited in an areas that was already a food deficit one. It concluded that the mountain people were becoming "homeless, hungrier and more vulnerable".[19]

Nepal has seen a large exodus of people to not only big urban areas like Kathmandu but also smaller towns like Nepalganj, Birendranagar (Surkhet), Ghorahi (Dang valley) and Lamahi. The sale of smaller plots of land was booming in such locations and there was a severe housing shortage.[20]

(iii) Tourism Adversely affected and its Multiplier Effect

Tourism industry in Nepal started facing a number of problems after the hijacking of Indian airlines aircraft from Kathmandu that ended in Taliban ruled Kandahar in Afghanistan in December 1999. Many western tourist-generating countries issued travel advisories that travel to Nepal may not be safe. The terrorist attack on 9/11 caused further fall in the number of visiting tourists. In addition, the Maoist insurgency in the country has affected tourist arrivals adversely.

The number of trekkers visiting the most popular trekking area in Nepal in the Annapurnas declined from 76,000 in 2000 to 37,000 in 2002.[21] The Maoists started charging "entrance fees" to tourists visiting Rolwaling trekking area east of Kathmandu. They also issued receipts that said, "thanking the tourists for donating to the Maoist cause for the success of People's war". They are reported to be extorting from Rs 1,000 to Rs 3,000 per person.[22] Although 1,000 tourists were visiting Manaslu trekking area in previous years, annually; the number had declined to less than 100. This was due to lack of security. Maoists have occupied the field office of project and campsites of tourists. Lodges and hotels in the trekking area have closed.[23] The Maoists have also started demanding donations from trekkers in Kanchenjunga area in eastern part of the country. A mountaineering team in the area was asked Rs 25,000 donation per head.[24] The town of Jiri where the classic trek to Everest Base Camp starts, is facing severe problems due to drop in the number of tourists. More than 40 lodges have already been closed. Existing hotels and lodges have lain off their employees.[25] Many entrepreneurs in touristy Thamel area of Kathmandu were thinking of changing their profession due to declining number of tourists.[26] Many financial institutions in Pokhara area declined to invest in hotels and resorts under construction due to uncertain future prospects.[27]

(iv) Reduction in Foreign Aid

International assistance being received for many projects at the local level was reduced due to the fact that elections for local governments could not be held in time and there was no local government for some time. Several projects had to be cut back or could not be extended due to Maoist activities. GARDEP (Gulmi Arghakhanchi Rural Development Project) implemented in two districts situated east of insurgency affected Rukum and Rolpa districts could not be continued in its third phase. Maoists had in the past few years, targeted it. They also made a requirement that all the activities of the GARDEP must receive their prior approval before implementation.[28]

(iv) Alleged Human Rights Violations

There have been serious violations of human rights from both Maoist side and the Government during the six-year insurgency in Nepal. A report by Amnesty International for the year 2002 reported deliberate killings of political opponents. Brutal execution style, killings of police officers, taking prisoners and cruel and inhuman treatments were also mentioned. It also accused them of having recruited children as combatants who were being trained in using arms. It also reported twenty-eight teachers were killed and dozens were maimed. Maoists were also accused of using innocent civilians as human shields in their attacks and cutting off the heads of their dead comrades after attacks to ensure that they could not be identified.

Amnesty International charged Nepalese army of torture, rape and making arrests outside any legal framework.[29] The Army attacked five innocent villagers in Nuwakot district returning home after a funeral in November 2002 on the suspicion of being Maoists. Complaints were made in district headquarters that the villagers were not Maoists and compensation should be paid to them. A Human Rights Cell of RNA investigated the case and found that the five persons killed were not Maoists. The families of victims were later, paid compensation amounting to Rs 100,000 each.

Human Rights Yearbook for the year 2002 prepared by INSEC, a NGO working in Nepal has listed several cases of human rights abuse by both the State and the Maoists. It says 3297 persons were killed by state and 1358 by the Maoists. The Yearbook concluded that the year 2002 was the "darkest year" from human rights perspective.

National Human Rights Commission stated 5000 Nepalese lost their lives in 2002 due to conflict. It blamed both the State and the Maoists for this. It said the Maoists were violent and offensive and the State controlled security forces unleashed similar violence to control such activities. It accused the State of being responsible for disappearance and unlawful detention. State also failed to inform the relatives about the death of persons killed in encounters or security actions. It accused the Maoists of murdering politicians and those accused of being informers, abduction, torture, inhumane and degrading treatment and killing of security personnel after taking them hostage. They also used children as "human shield" during violent conflicts. It also accused the Maoists of collecting funds forcibly, misbehaving against women, looting of private and public property, attacking educational institutions and setting fire public buses.[30]

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CHAPTER EIGHT

The Solution

At what stage would you lay down arms?

Why should we? We are leading a democratic revolution. The Royal Army is the real impediment to democracy because it is acting in defence of the King and against the interests of the country and the people.

We are not going to lay down arms. We want to create a new national army by incorporating our own cadres....

-Baburam Bhattarai

The Government and the Maoists announced a cease-fire in January 30, 2003; one year and two months after the first cease-fire was broken by the Maoists unilaterally. Government agreed to stop calling them "terrorists" and to remove the "bounty" on the head of the Maoist leaders. Interpol was asked to remove their name from the list of terrorists. The main demand of the Maoists was that a constitutional assembly be called to form an interim government, promulgate a new constitution of Nepal and that a round table conference be held to discuss the major issues. There were doubts if the military wing of the Maoists was ready to accept cease-fire as proposed by the political wing. Unlike in August 2001 when the first dialogue was held which failed, the head of military wing Comrade Badal emerged in Kathmandu and was named as one of the members of the negotiating team. There were grounds for optimism this time.

Maoist leader Baburam Bhattarai has said Maoists had to declare cease-fire due to "international pressure".[1] It seems that India was increasing surveillence of the open Indo-Nepal border and was watching the activities of the insurgents who were in India. Some had been arrested and handed over to the Nepalese government. It is quite possible that the Indians had acted due to friendly "persuasion" from the

United States. Mangal Siddhi Manandhar, a former Member of Parliament from CPN (UML), has given several reasons for the cease-fire between the Government forces and the Maoists. He believes the Indian Territory, which was being used by the Maoists as a safe haven, "had turned increasingly hostile". Security forces of the government had better arms and received training. According to him, the Maoists were not getting popular due to extortion, abduction, murder, intolerance to differing opinions and destruction of development infrastructure". On the other hand, Government could not defeat the Maoists even after employing the Nepalese Army for more than a year and it looked likely that the conflict would be a long one.[2] A Maoist team headed by Dr Baburam Bhattarai emerged in Kathmandu on 30th March 2003 to participate in second dialogue with the government. There were four other members: Ram Bahadur Badal, Dev Gurung, Matrika Yadav and Krishna Bahadur Mahara. If Baburam Bhattarai was a Brahmin and Mahara a Chhetri, Badal and Gurung were representative of *Janjatis* and Yadav was a *Madhise* from the Terai. The Maoists were trying to make their team as representative as possible. On the other hand, there was criticism that there was no representation from women and Dalits. Maoist Supreme Leader Prachanda did not emerge from his hideout although he continued issuing statements. The Maoists had three main demands: Interim Government, Round Table Conference and elections for constitutional assembly for drafting a new constitution of the country. Maoist leader Baburam Bhattarai has said a national army should be formed that will contain representation of ethnic groups of Nepal and it should be under elected representatives of the people. He said the decision whether to integrate the Royal Nepal Army (RNA) and PLA (People's Liberation Army) of the Maoists will be taken by the Round Table Conference.

The Maoists had been claiming that there were "two state powers in the country that they named "the old regime" and the "new regime". Narayan Singh Pun, Minister for Physical Planning and Works agreed to this and said, "There is a balance of power between the government and the Maoists. Both the forces have their own armies and weapons to justify the existence of two state powers".[3]

The Maoists organized a number of large meetings and rallies in Kathmandu and other cities in the country after becoming "public". In the speech he made in Kathmandu, he said the major blame for poverty in the country lied with the monarchy that ruled the country for more than 235 years. He said the 1990 Constitution was already dead and didn't support the idea of reviving the dissolved parliament.

There was a long delay in agreeing to code of conduct and for initiating the dialogue. A twenty-two point Code of Conduct was signed between the Government and the Maoists on March. The highlights of Code of Conduct included gradual release of detainees, no extortion and kidnapping, no strike or "bandhs" during talks, freedom of movement to either side across the country.[4] The United Nations was reported to be interested in acting as a mediator for government-Maoist talks. Kul Chandra Gautam, a high-ranking UN official having a Nepalese nationality who met Baburam Bhattarai in early April, brought a proposal. The Norwegians were also reported to be prepared for this role if needed. [5]

The first round of talks was held in April 2003. Nothing substantive was agreed on this talk. However, an agreement was announced after a second round of talks held in early May about restricting RNA in its patrolling duty to five kilometers from its barracks. The Government denied that any such agreement had been made. There was much discussion in later days if such an understanding was ever reached. Leaders of some political parties claimed it was a "farce". It was later found that there were no minutes of talks as it is a normal practice. The Maoists attacked a RNA battalion that was patrolling outside 5km in Surkhet district where they are reported to be strong. They said that they were imposing the rule themselves.

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[5] *Rajdhani, 3/4/03*

CHAPTER NINE

Transforming the Nation

The Constitution promulgated in 1990 after Popular Movement has failed to a large extent and it should either be amended or a new constitution needs to be made by a constituent assembly. In spite of the fact that the people were made sovereign under the constitution and its reputation as being one of the most liberal constitutions given to a country of the third world, it could not stop widespread corruption, lack of governance and security and above all, the insurgency. On one hand, some of the issues raised by the Maoists need to be addressed in this context. On the other hand, Nepal does not need a totalitarian system that has been tried and has failed in many countries of the world. Maoists need to be brought into national mainstream as a political party willing to contest elections and abide by its results. They should not be allowed to establish a Maoist dictatorship. Some of the changes that could be made are as follows.

Institutional transformation

Some of the demands made by political parties such as putting army under elected Parliament are correct in the long run. However, such steps are not likely to be effective in a society that is still traditional and is not fully literate. There is a danger of politicization of the armed forces as was the case with the Police and the intelligence network of the country during twelve years of post- 1990 Nepal. Such requirement that the number of ministers should not exceed ten percent of numbers of members of Parliament should be a step in horse-trading during formation of ministries. In order to address the issue of rampant corruption such institutions as CIAA (Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority) need to be strengthened.

Decentralization

Local governments should be strengthened to undertake development activities by mobilizing their own resources as well as by getting grant from the Centre. A proportion of central budget should be granted for this purpose. Some Maoist leaders have advocated autonomy for such backward regions as Karnali Zone. Normally, regions that are relatively affluent make the demand for autonomy. They want to use their own resources to the maximum extent for their own benefit without sharing with poorer regions. There has been no demand for autonomy from such backward regions as Bihar in India, Nordeste in Brazil or Sicily in Italy. There have been movements for autonomy or secession in relatively affluent area as Catalonia in Spain or Punjab in India.

Right of Self- determination and Affirmative Action

The 24-point proposal of Maoists includes right of self-determination, ethnic and regional autonomy including the right of self-determination for all janjati, Madhesis and other backward castes and backward regions.[1] In a democracy it is important to ensure that all the ethnic groups have adequate representation in policy making and implementing bodies. This is one of the issues in which some ethnic groups have a genuine grievance. On the other hand, such right should not be made an instrument of disintegration in the country. It is difficult to agree with Maoists on rights of ethnic autonomy and right of self-determination. Nepal is a unitary state and not a confederation as in Switzerland. Unlike in Switzerland where German, French and Italian speaking areas are well defined and geographically contagious, many ethnic groups in Nepal are spread all over the country. Such groups as Brahmins, Chhetris and Dalits are spread all over the country from Mechi River in the east to Mahakali in the west. While some *Janjati* groups as Gurung, Magar, Rai, Limbu and Newar have their own habitat, they no longer constitute absolute majority of population in most of their original areas. There are a large number of Nepali speaking Brahmins, Chhetris and Dalits living in those areas. More than half of Magars and a third of Newars have adopted Nepali as their mother tongue. The only link language these regions have is Nepali, the national language that is understood and spoken in Nepal. The most backward region in Nepal is in mid-west and far west where the majority of population is Nepali speaking and a group that is accused maintaining its hegemony on rest of the country. The link language in the Terai is either Nepali or Hindi although only its dialects such as Maithili, Bhojpuri and Awadhi are recognized as separate languages and not as dialects. Sanskrit heavily influences both Nepali and Hindi. Maoist insurgency has been a contributing factor in attacking Sanskrit schools and university in Nepal. They had been demanding and have now ensured that study of Sanskrit is no longer compulsory in the public schools. Sanskrit is a mother language of Nepali, Hindi, Maithili, Awadhi and Bhojpuri and Hindi. Many languages of Nepal including Nepali, Hindi, Maithili, Awadhi, Bhojpuri and Newari are saturated with Sanskrit words, study of some Sanskrit is needed to be fluent in these languages.

Discrimination against the Dalits continues to be practiced in Nepal although untouchability was banned. Although Dalits constitute about twelve percent of population there are few legislators and government officials who are Dalits. Some sort of affirmative action to ensure Dalit representation in legislative bodies at all levels for a limited period of time is needed to erase a legacy of centuries old discrimination.

These are only some of the issues that could be vehicles for transformation of Nepalese society. There may be others. A national level discussion and debate may be needed to attempt to reach a consensus on these and other issues. The Maoists raised some of these issues.

Empowerment of Women

Women in Nepal had to suffer unequal treatment throughout many centuries. Nepal has signed several international conventions assuring equal treatment for women. Legislation in recent years has also banned polygamy and ended discrimination against women in inheritence of property. Women from certain ethnic groups in Nepal have been more liberated than others. It is desirable to increase women's representation in legislature and policy making bodies.

One of the interesting aspects of the Maoist insurgency was the large number of women cadres and guerilla fighters. There is no dispute about the fact that women need to be empowered, the only question is its extent and pace. Are we ready in the context of present day Nepal ready to empower Nepalese women similar to that in Scandinavia?. Are we ready to enlist Nepalese women in the Nepalese army similar to what the Maoists have done? Although women have formed an important part of Tamil guerillas in Sri Lanka, the only country where women have received military training in large numbers has been in Israel. It is interesting to note in this context that Britain had her first woman Prime Minister only in the later half of twentieth century and it took more than two centuries for one of the two major parties in the United States to nominate candidate for Vice President.

Stakes for Nepal and the World

Nepal is no longer an isolated country as it was during the first half of the twentieth century. The Information Revolution has also touched it. It is now possible to read Nepalese newspapers and get news about Nepal in far corners of the world on Internet or to send messages by e-mail. There is now a Nepalese diaspora working in many parts of world such as the Gulf, Malaysia, India and several countries of Europe and America. There are also now a large number of tourists who have traveled to Nepal and are interested in knowing about what's happening in the country. I delivered a talk on the Maoist insurgency in Nepal to students in a college in South Carolina in the United States, majority of whose students were Afro-Americans. When I told about considerable participation of Dalits in the movement, one student asked me if it was similar to struggle of the blacks to end discrimination in the US. Such questions as "Would the Maoists give up their arms and join the mainstream"? Would Nepal be converted to a People's Republic as in North Korea or Republics of the former Soviet Union or East Europe is of interest not only to India but also the only remaining superpower in the world- the United States. Maoist Leader Prachanda is reported to have told a journalist that revolution in Nepal is part of world revolution and People's army in Nepal is a part of international proletarian army.[2] He has also said that failure of the Maoists in Nepal would mean not only failure of their movement but also that of international communist movement to a significant extent.[3]

There are also prospects that any Maoist takeover in Nepal would make any peaceful transition of power to other forces in the future very difficult unless it were to be followed by a violent revolution. A very interesting question is whether there would be free and fair elections under the Maoists? Any large-scale human rights violations in a future conflict will draw immediate international attention. None of the Nepal's friends in the international arena would like to see the birthplace of Buddha as a "failed state". Nor would they like to see a totalitarian communist state in the lap of the Himalayas especially at a time when communist states are a thing of the past in most parts of the world.

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Chronology

February 1951	End of Rana regime and advent of democracy in Nepal
December 1960	King Mahendra dismisses BP Koirala who had been elected Prime Minister under parliamentary system
November 1990	Constitution promulgated in Nepal declares the people to be sovereign and limits powers of the monarch leading to parliamentary style of government
13 February 1996	People's War in Nepal declared by Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)
25 September 2000	Maoists attack Dunai, district headquarters of Dolpa in western hills destroying district police headquarters, jail and two bridges and rob Rs 6 million from bank. 14 policemen are killed
April 2001	Maoists attack police post at Rukumkot at Rukum and take 23 hostages
1 June 2001	The Crown Prince Dipendra massacres King Birendra and eight other members of the royal family including the Queen

	allegedly. Prince Gyanendra, brother of the King succeeds.
23 July 2001	First cease-fire between the Government and the Maoists
30 August 2001	First round of talks between the Government and the Maoists
23 November 2001	Cease-fire broken unilaterally by the Maoists as they attack army barracks in Dang in mid western Terai and Salleri in eastern hills
26 November 2001	A state of emergency is imposed in Nepal as recommended by Prime Minister Deuba. Maoists are declared to be a terrorist group
16 February 2002	Maoists attack Mangalsen, headquarters of Achham district in far western hills resulting in the largest casualty (more than 138 including 57 soldiers) on a single day since the start of insurgency. The Maoists also robbed Rs 20 million from the local banks in Mangalsen. After visiting the site. The American Ambassador to Nepal said the Maoists " were the same as terrorists elsewhere such as the *Shining Path, Abu Sayaf, the Khmer Rouge* or *Al Qaida*."
23 April 2002	Government declares a bounty of Rs 5 million on the heads of insurgent leaders

	Baburam Bhattarai, Prachanda and Mohan Baidya (Kiran)
May 2002	Maoists attack Mahendra Sanskrit University in Dang and destroy manuscripts and buildings
22 May 2002	House of Representatives dissolved on the recommendation of Prime Minister Deuba
28 May 2002	Army camp in Khara, Rukum attacked by the Maoists
12 August 2002	Interpol issues red alert notice in the name of eight Maoist leaders
28 August 2002	State of Emergency ends
8 September 2002	Maoists attack Police checkpost at Bhiman, Sindhuli killing 49 policemen
9 September 2002	Maoists attack Sandhikharka, district headquarters of Arghakhanchi in western hills killing 65 security personnel and rob banks
4 October 2002	King dismisses Deuba government for incompetence for its failure to hold elections within six months of dissolution of lower house as required by the constitution
28 October 2002	Maoists attack district headquarters at Okhaldhunga in eastern hills and airport at Rumjatar. Thirty- two Maoists and two

	armymen are killed
15 November 2002	Maoists attack Khalanga, Jumla, and headquarters of Karnali Zone killing 33 policemen, 4 soldiers and Chief District Officer. According to government sources, 105 insurgents were also killed.
	Maoists attack police post in Takukot of Gorkha district in western Nepal killing 23 policemen
30 January 2003	Ceasefire is declared between the Government and the Maoists
14 March 2003	Government and the Maoists sign a 22-point code of conduct. It envisages gradual release of detainees from the government and the Maoists agreeing that there would be no extortion or kidnapping or strikes or "bandhs" from their side. Both sides agree for a freedom of movement across the country
28 March 2003	Maoist leaders including Baburam Bhattarai, Ram Bahadur Thapa Badal, Dev Gurung and Matrika Yadav arrive in Kathmandu and make public appearance at a press conference. Bhattarai says they had to return to Nepal due to external pressure
27 April 2003	Start of first round of talks between the Government and the Maoists

4 May 2003	Five political parties including Nepali Congress, CPN (United Marxist Leninist), Nepal Peasant's and Workers Party, Nepal Jana Morcha and Nepal Sadbhawana Party condemn the King being the "root cause of all disorders" in the country and announce a joint mass movement
30 May 2003	Prime Minister Lokendra Bahadur Chand resigns
4 June 2003	Surya Bahadur Thapa is appointed Prime Minister. He appoints a cabinet including members of his own party RPP after failing to get support from other political parties
17 August 2003	Third round of Government-Maoist talks start in Nepalganj in mid-western Terai. A second session is held in Hapure village in western part of Dang district claimed by the Maoists to be their "capital". Government presents its agenda offering to amend the Constitution. Its proposals include reservations for women, Dalits and Janjatis and agreement with Maoist proposals for round-table conference and an interim Government that will also include the Maoists However, it does not agree with calling a Constitutional

	Assembly as proposed by the Maoists. Maoists rejected any proposal that does not include elections to a Constitutional Assembly.
29 August 2003	The Maoists break the cease-fire unilaterally stating there was no reason to continue as the Government was unwilling to consider their demand for elections for Constitutional Assembly. They attack two colonels of RNA, killing one and severely injuring the other. They also rob a bank in Dang district

Appendices

Appendix One

NAMING NAMES- PROFILES OF SOME MAOIST LEADERS

A brief biographical sketch of some of the prominent leaders of the Maoists in Nepal is presented in the following lines. It is interesting to note that all of them were born after 1951 when the Rana rule was overthrown in Nepal. On the other hand, none of the Prime Ministers who ruled Nepal before 2003 were born after 1951 movement. Two of them (Prachanda and Badal) migrated from the hills to the valley of Chitwan in the inner Terai in the 1960's.

(i) Pushpakamal Dahal "Prachanda"

- Top leader, Organizer and the Commander-in-chief of the Maoists

Prachanda or the "terrible one" is the topmost leader among the Maoists in Nepal. Maoists have coined a new word, "Prachandapath" to call the Maoist movement in Nepal. He was born in the western fringe of Pokhara valley, on the way to Kusma in 1954 and moved to Chitwan valley to the town of Sivanagar in the 1960's. He studied at high school there and impressed his teachers by his intelligence sc that he was re-named Pushpakamal or Lotus-flower although his original name had been Chhabilal. He studied in Rampur Agricultural College in Chitwan. He is also reported to have worked for USAID for several months. He is married to Sita Paudel. One Indian weekly called him "the world's most secretive mass leader."[1] There are few people who have met him recently. There is only one photograph, which is claimed to be his. There were rumours that somebody may be impersonating his name. He is supposed to have a bodyguard of sixteen persons.

A bounty of Rs 5 million (about US$ 600,000) was declared on his head in 2002[2] However, this was later removed after declaration of cease-fire in January 2003.

Pushpa Kamal Dahal is known to have used other *nom de plumes* besides Prachanda according to an ex-Maoist leader met by the author. These are *Bishwas* and *Ajeya signifying* "trust" and "invincible" respectively.

(ii) **Baburam Bhattarai**- Intellectual

Baburam Bhattarai was born in a Brahmin family in the village of Khoplang in Gorkha district in 1953 not very far from the historic fort where the process of unification of Nepal was started by King Prithvi Narayan Shah two and half centuries earlier. He studied in a school started by western missionaries in Aap Pipal and was a brilliant student academically. He always stood first in his class. Among his classmates was Dr Upendra Devkota, a well-known surgeon who was appointed Minister of Health by King Gyanendra in 2003 and was included in the team for dialogue with the Maoists from the government side. Baburam Bhattarai was the leader of the Maoist team.

He was board first in School Leaving Certificate held all over Nepal in 1971 and studied in Amrit Science College in Kathmandu. Later, he went to study in Chandigarh in India and later in JNU in Delhi where he did his doctorate in architecture in 1986. His thesis was on "The Nature of Underdevelopment and the Regional Structure of Nepal". During his years at JNU he did not get involved in revolutionary student politics. He was a student at Centre for Study of Regional Development at School of Social Sciences. According to a news report published in an Indian daily newspaper he appears to have been a "silent worker with organizational skills who spent most of his time with the impoverished immigrant Nepalese population" in Delhi.[3]

He got married to Hisila Yemi, daughter of one time minister Dharma Ratna Yemi (Tuladhar) in a government appointed by King Tribhuwan after advent of democracy in Nepal. She is a Newar girl and her family was a follower of Buddhism. According to his mother-in-law, Baburam was very studious and had a book in his hand. He would wash dishes when his wife Hisila cooked and would cook while his wife washed dishes. Hisila did not change her last name even after marriage. Such practices were very unusual in a traditional society.[4]

A bounty of Rs 5 million (about US$ 65,000) was declared on Baburam Bhattarai[5] dead or alive. It was withdrawn when cease-fire was announced in January 2003.

Baburam Bhattarai went to visit the temple of

Manakamana along with his parents during cease-fire talks in June 2003. However, he was interested only in viewing the recently constructed cable car and did not visit the interior of the temple.[6] Unlike most other Maoist leaders he uses his *nom de plume* very rarely.

According to an ex-Maoist leader contacted by the author, he has used such names as *Muktimanab* and *Laldhwaj.*

(iii) Ram Bahadur Thapa, Badal, Military Strategist

Badal was born in 1955 in Gulmi, a district western hills just east of the area where Maoist insurgency was to start in 1992. He was born in a Magar family that had a long tradition of working in British and Indian armies. He went to study in India where his father was posted. He lived in Meghalaya and Andhra Pradesh where his father had been posted. The family migrated to Chitwan in the inner Terai. He is married to Nayankala when he was 29 years old. Even his wife is also reported to be participating in the insurgency. They have a son and a daughter. He studied in High School in Chitwan and also attended Agricultural College in Rampur also located in Chitwan.

He was sent to the then Soviet Union for higher studies but returned before completing his studies since he wanted to participate in Popular Movement.[7] Two news reports have mentioned that he studied Military Engineering in the Soviet Union.[8] According to some reports he received training in Chechenya or Libya.[9] He participated in movement against the Panchayat in 1980 and then went underground till the end of the Panchayat era in 1990. Government had declared a reward of Rs 3 million for arresting Badal in 2001. However, it was removed after the beginning of cease-fire in January 2003.

Badal claims his family was originally lower middle class that has now become "proleterian". He is in favour of making Nepal a secular state. Almost all of Magars in Gulmi district from where Badal comes speak Nepali as their mother tongue and follow Hinduism. When asked what inspired him to be active in politics, Badal says unequal treatment that he received while living in India made him a rebel. His parents met him after eleven years in 2003. His father, Karna Bahadur Thapa worked for thirty- two years in the Indian army and also fought in the Second World War. Badal was the third among his seven children. When his father was interviewed by a local newspaper, he said "He may forget to eat but will never forget his duty".[10]

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Appendix Two

40-Point Demands of the Maoists

A letter was sent by Babu Ram Bhattarai to the then Prime Minister of Nepal, Sher Bahadur Deuba of Nepali Congress on February 1996 in which he mentioned that the country was going downhill after the new constitution was promulgated in 1990 as the country had become the second poorest country in the world and it was on the 'verge of bankruptcy". He made a 40-point demand relating to nationalism, democracy and livelihood and warned that if the Government did not respond to these demands, his party will adopt the path of armed struggle. A list of 40-Point demands is as follows.

Nationality

1. All unequal treaties including 1950 Indo-Nepal Treaty should be abrogated.
2. Mahakali Treaty should be abrogated immediately
3. Indo-Nepal border should be regulated and controlled. Vehicles with Indian number plate should not be allowed to

enter Nepal

4. Recruitment centers for Gurkha soldiers in Nepal should be closed immediately and decent jobs should be found for would-be recruits
5. Nepalese should be given preference for employment and a system of "work permit" should be introduced for foreigners
6. Domination of foreign capital in Nepalese business, finance and industry should be stopped
7. Sufficient income should be generated from customs duty that could be used for development of the country
8. Cultural invasion of imperial and colonial nature should be stopped. Vulgar Hindi films, videos and magazines should be stopped.
9. Bribing by imperialists in the name of INGOs and NGOs should be stopped

Public Well Being

10. A new constitution should be drafted by representatives of the people
11. All special privileges of the King and the Royal family should be abolished

12. Army, police and the bureaucracy should be under the control of the People
13. All represseive Acts including the Security Act should be repealed
14. All those arrested in Rukum, Rolpa, Jajarkot, Gorkha, Kabhre, Sindhupalchowk, Sindhuli, Dhanusa, Ramechhap should be released immediately and false cases against them should be withdrawn.
15. The operation of armed police should be stopped in all districts
16. Such persons who disappeared from police custody including Dilip Chaudhary, Bhuwan Tahap Magar, Prabhakar Subedi should be investigated and those those responsible should be investigated and all false cases should be withdrawn
17. All those who were killed during the People's Movement should be declared "martyrs" and the families of those injured during the Movement should be compensated and those responsible should be punished
18. Nepal should be declared a secular state
19. No discrimination should be made to girls in granting property rights

20. All caste-based exploitation should be ended. If a particular ethnic group forms a majority in a certain area they should be allowed to form autonomous units
21. The status of Dalits as "untouchables" should end and discrimination should end
22. All languages spoken in the country should be given equal status. Provision for teaching in student's mother tongue should be given upto higher secondary level
23. There should be right to free expression and freedom of press and publication. Government owned media should be made autonomous
24. Academic freedom of scholars, writers, artists and intellectuals should be guaranteed
25. Discrimination between the hills and the Terai should be ended. Regional autonomy should be given to backward areas. Amicable relations should be established between the urban and the rural areas.
26. Decentralization should be applied and local bodies should be empowered

People's Livelihood

27. Those who till the land should be made

owners. Land belonging to feudal Landlords should be distributed to the landless

28. Property of middlemen and comprador capitalists should be confiscated and Nationalized. Unproductive capital should be used to promote industrialization.
29. All should be guaranteed employment. An unemployment allowance should be given to all till employment could be arranged
30. A system of providing minimum wage for those working in agriculture and industry should be provided
31. Homeless should be given proper housing. Squatters should not be till they are provided alternate housing
32. Poor farmers should be made exempt from loan payments. Loans provided to small farmers should be written off.
33. Fertilizers and seeds should be made available at cheap rate to farmers. Farmers should be provided access to market for their products
34. Victims of flood and draught should be given appropriate relief

35. All should be given free and scientific medical service and education. Commercialization of education should be stopped.
36. Inflation should be checked and wages should increase in proportion to inflation. The supply of essential goods at cheap rate should be made available to everyone
37. All villages should be provided with facilities of drinking water, road and electric power
38. Cottage and small industries should be given protection and facilities
39. Corruption, black marketeering and taking of commissions should be stopped
40. Orphans, disabled, elderly and children should be provided special help and protection.

(Unofficial Translation)

Appendix Three

Government Proposals

The following is a brief summary of proposals presented by the Government in the Third Round of Talks held at Nepalganj on August 2003. The proposals attempted to address some of the issues raised by the Maoists including reservations for women, Dalits and Janjatis, organizing a round-table conference and formation of an interim Government that will include the Maoists. It proposed to introduce the reforms by amending the existing Constitution. The Maoists on the other hand, want elections for a constitutional assembly.

1. The structure of upper house of Parliament will be changed by making proportional representation of the people including Dalits, Janjatis and renowned persons.
2. The representation of women will be at least 25% in both the houses of Parliament
3. The present structure, geographical distribution and number of local units

will be changed in view of ethnic distribution, state of development and geography

4. A provision of referendum on matters of national importance will be made
5. A provision for using national languages as second language in local governments will be made
6. A system of reservation should be made for Dalits and Janjatis in proportion of population for a limited time based on human development indices
7. An interim Government will be formed before elections for House of Representatives and for amending the Constitution
8. An important agenda for Government-Maoist talks should be handing over of arms by the insurgents

Glossary

Bahun	Nepali word for Brahmin
Dang valley	A large valley situated just south of the hilly regions of Rapti Zone affected by insurgency inhabited originally by Tharus that has seen increasing migration from the hilly region. There have been several clashes between the Army and the Maoists in this valley
Dalit	A group of people in the hills and the Terai who were considered to be untouchables
Gorkha	A district in western Nepal where Nepal's Unification started in the eighteenth century that also happens to be home district of Maoist leader Baburam Bhattarai
Gurkha	Soldiers from Nepal in British and Indian armies
ISI	Intelligence agency of Pakistan
Kot Massacre	A massacre of a large number of nobles in Nepal's court in 1846 That led to century old Rana oligarchy in the country
Janasarkar	A term used by Maoists for People's Government
Janjati	Tribal groups consisting mainly of Gurungs, Magars, Rais and Limbus many of whom were working as soldiers in British and Indian armies
Kilo Shera Two	Police operations against the Maoists in 1998 in Rolpa and Rukum
Madhise	An inhabitant of the Terai speaking such dialects of Hindi as Maithili, Bhojpuri or Awadhi
Magar	An ethnic group living mainly in western and

	mid western parts of Nepal in an area where Maoist insurgency started
Maobadi	Nepali name for Maoist
Prachanda Path	A proleterian revolution suitable for Nepal supposed to be a fusion of Chinese model (encerclement of towns from villages) and the Russian model (general armed insurrection)
RIM	Revolutionary International Movement, an international organization of Maoists
Rolpa	District in mid-western Nepal populated largely by Magars where insurgency started
RNA	Royal Nepalese Army
Rukum	District in the hills of mid-western Nepal affected by insurgency
Shining Path	Maoist organization in Peru that was active in 1980's
Suraki	Nepali word meaning a "informer". This word was used by Maoists to those who spied on them
Tharu	An ethnic group living in the northern part of the Terai, many of whose members, especially in mid-West and far West have joined the Maoists
UML-CPN	The largest communist party in Nepal called United Marxist Leninist that ruled the country for few months
VDC	Village Development Committee, lowest unit of local Self-government in Nepal

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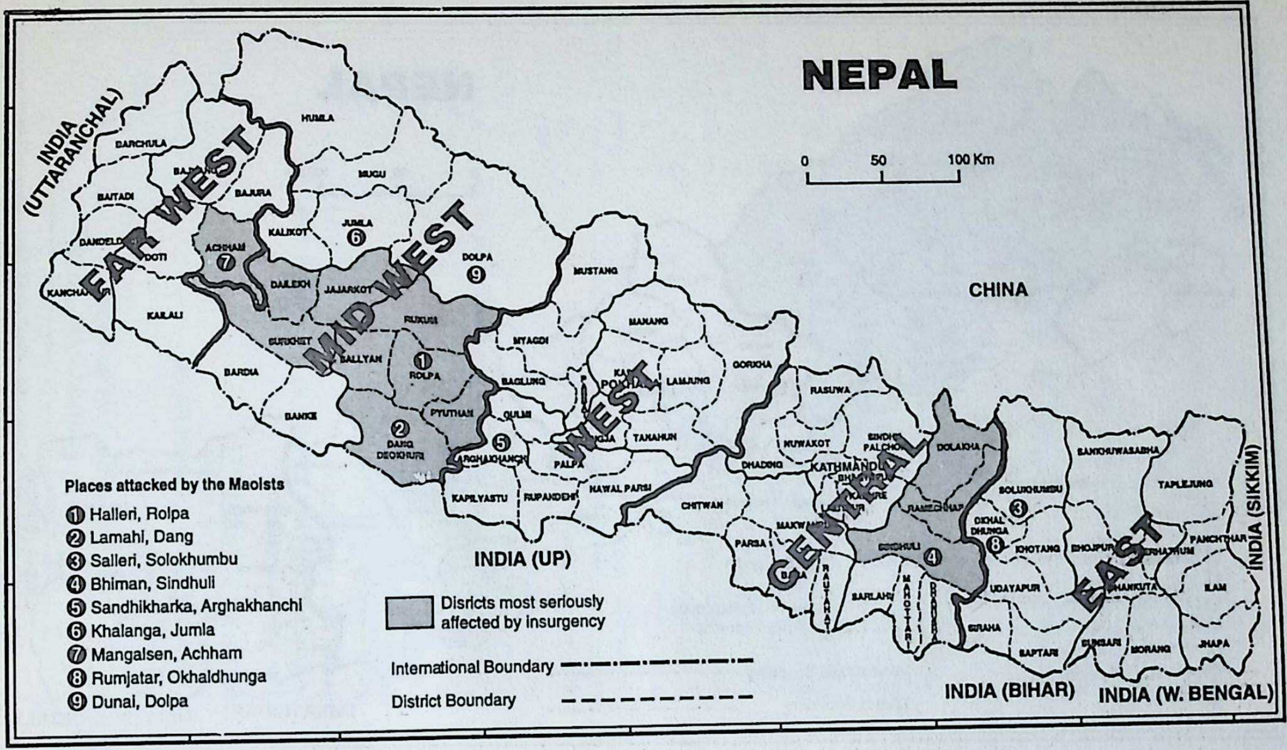
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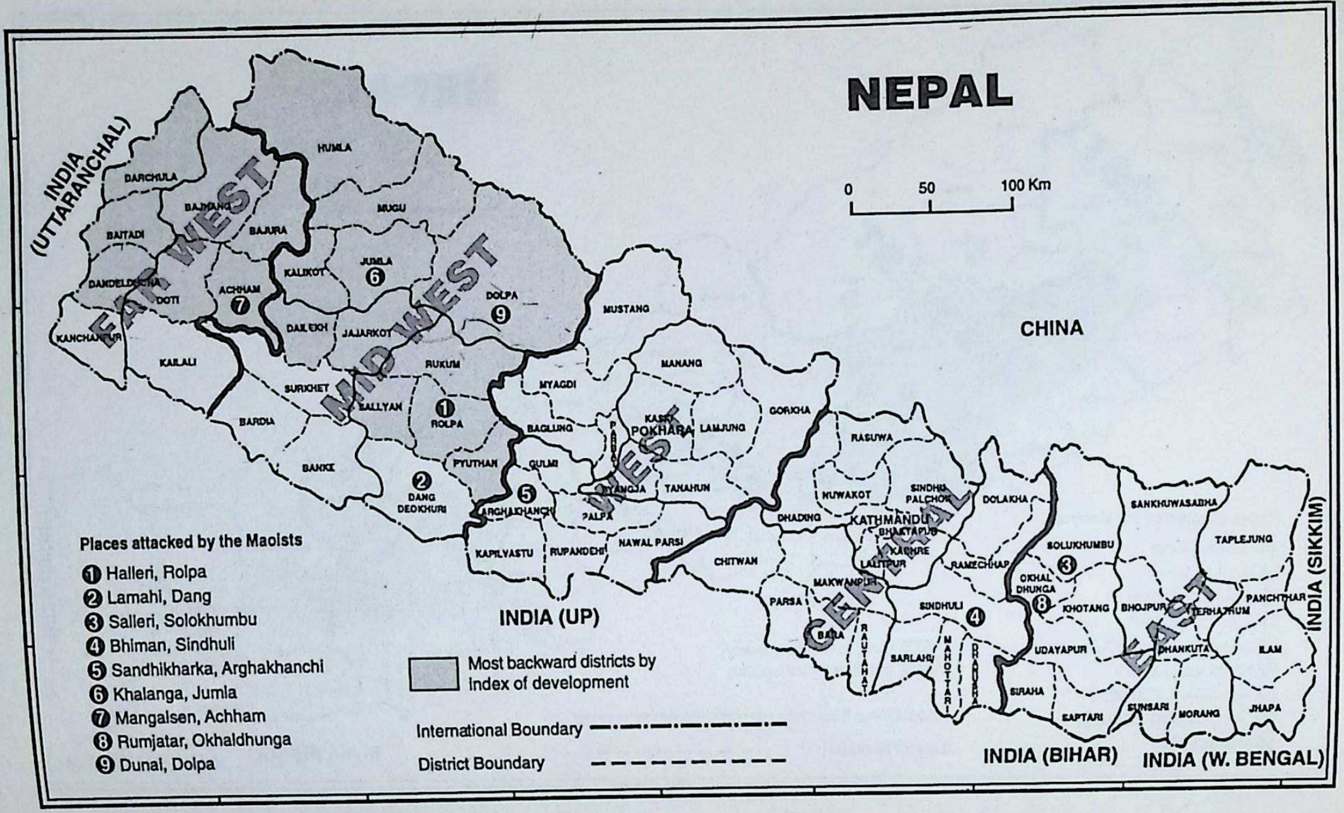
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An Analytical Study of the Maoist Insurgency in Nepal

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Maoists is first comprehensive and candid account of the Maoist insurgency that has been rocking the Himalayan kingdom for nearly a decade now. Authentic and up-to-date, the book discusses how Nepal popularly known as the birthplace of Buddha, the Emperor of world peace, has recently got a new name — a nation of Maoist insurgents who want to abolish Monarchy and turn Nepal into a 'Peoples' Republic' The Maoists control a large part of the country, especially in the Western hills and more than 7,000 people were reported to be killed by the end of 2002. The continuation of the Insurgency causes a grave setback to the Democratic set-up in Nepal that has flourished since 1990 Popular Movement that resulted in the people of Nepal being sovereign. The author here attempts to uncover the roots of this turbulence, outlining Maoist targets in destroying nation's infrastructure, in burning books and closing down of schools and provides an insight into the mind and motives of the insurgents. Including details on the role of Dalits and Women in the Insurgency, Prakash A Raj unleashes the socio-political implications of the Movements and examines the role of the Neighboring countries, the Superpower and the Insurgencies in other countries in shaping the present face of the Maoists in Nepal. As numerous Dialogues and Cease-fires continue to fail time and again, the disturbing question book grapples is — Will Maoists ever give up their arms or will Nepal turn into another Cambodia, Peru or Afghanistan?

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